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THE ASSASSINATION of Senator Huey Long will immediately arouse sympathy for his memory that could not be felt for him while he lived. Political murder is a vile crime, and we share the regret and shame felt by the country that he was defeated by a bullet and not in an open political contest. We also give him the credit he earned for pushing through reforms in Louisiana, simplifying an antiquated state machinery, redistributing the burden of taxation, and stimulating the interest in education. Nor shall we question that his championship of the poor was as sincere as anything in his equipment of distorted passions. Giving him every advantage of sympathetic consideration does not however raise him to the status of martyr. Huey Long was America's first dictator. His was a little dictatorship in domain, but it was grim and vengeful in spirit, and it was a sensational challenge to democracy. Having set up a regime of fear he had to live in it, and went about his home state, and even his country, closely guarded to avert the disaster which now has overtaken him. To those unfamiliar with Louisiana the deed may appear on a par with the assassination of other political figures, of which there have been many in our history. But it was not the same. His murder appears to have been a deliberately political act, one of the very few in its category in American experience. Thus we have had a laboratory demonstration of a dictatorship—of its good intentions, of its immoral practices, and now of its violent ending.

IT IS CHARACTERISTIC of dictatorships that Long should not have left a political heir to whom Louisiana can look to maintain orderly government. He did not invite the close collaboration of gifted men, and he treated his subordinates with a mixture of vulgar tyranny and cordial comradeship. There was no crown prince; so now there will be dozens of claimants. Whether the Long machine will break up without violence only time will tell, but that it will collapse appears certain. Louisiana would be happier if this promised the coming to power of a competent opposition. It does not. The anti-Long forces are corrupt, anti-social, and half paralyzed. Were this not so, Long, of course, never could have risen to the heights he occupied. His death undoubtedly means troubled times in Louisiana. Nationally, however, the political situation is simplified. Now there will be no formidable third-party movement in the South threatening to wreck the Democratic Party. With the death of Long the field of demagoguery is left to Father Coughlin, of whom one need be much less afraid.

CONSUMERS' RESEARCH, refuge of the ultimate consumer, is the last source from which we should have expected labor trouble. Yet Washington, New Jersey, where the plant is now situated, is the scene of a strike and a lockout complete with all the trimmings, including a yellow-dog contract, a large picket line, sheriff's deputies, and charges of "agitation." The immediate issue is the discharge of three employees all of whom had apparently been in high favor with Mr. Schlink and his fellow-members of the board of directors until they became active in the union, Local 20055 of the Technical, Editorial, and Office Assistants' Union, affiliated with the A. F. of L. The union does not question the technical right of Consumers' Research to fire its employees at will—the yellow-dog provision takes care of that. The principal object of the strike is to reduce the labor turnover. The strikers point out that the privilege to discharge at will in the first six months of employment has been exercised so liberally that the number of employees who have left Consumers' Research during the last two years exceeds the number of its present staff, and that only six of those originally on the staff when the organization moved to Washington now remain. They are also demanding reinstatement of the three discharged men, recognition of the union, and a minimum wage of $15 a week. The paradox of labor trouble in Consumers' Research goes back to another more fundamental paradox: the success of the organization, both financially and as a social force, is dependent upon the mass support of consumers, yet it has consistently failed to cooperate with other consumers' groups and has steadily moved in the direction of autocratic control, which is not usually concerned with employees' rights. The strikers look forward to a long siege.

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Their best hope lies in enlisting the support of subscribers to Consumers' Research, who are being summoned, in New York City at least, to attend a mass-meeting to discuss the strike.

THE RECENT TRIP to Havana of Senators Wheeler and Nye in the interest of the Chase National Bank indicates the confusion that afflicts many American liberals. Doubtless both men believed that they were acting for the benefit of the small investor, who has been the victim of political and economic developments beyond his control. While not condoning the action of Wall Street bankers in issuing securities which they knew to be worthless, the Senators felt that the small man should not have to bear the brunt of the big man's errors. Sincerity, however, is a poor cloak for ignorance, especially when the facts are readily available. The $40,000,000 loan of the Chase National Bank, the interest on which Wheeler and Nye were seeking to collect, was ostensibly advanced to the Machado government for public works. Actually, what money remained after the bankers deducted their commissions and the Machadistas filled their pockets, went into the construction of a military highway and a $20,000,000 gilt-domed Capitol, originally bid out for $3,500,000. Machado and his followers are known to have made $6,000,000 on the deal. The bankers were well aware that the Machado government was corrupt and unstable. They knew that in Cuba's impoverished condition there was serious risk that the money would never be repaid. Yet in disposing of the bonds to the public they represented them as sound investments. Unfortunately for the Chase National Bank, no market could be found for 60 per cent of the bonds. We gravely suspect that pressure from the owners of this 60 per cent rather than from the small investors who hold 40 per cent is really responsible for the Senators' trip. Whether this is the case or not, the interest which is due to the small investor should be paid not by the Cuban people, who received no benefit from the loan, but by the great banking concern which has amassed millions by deception.

MAGISTRATE LOUIS I. BRODSKY, in dismissing charges of unlawful assembly brought against five men in connection with the riot on the German liner Bremen on July 26, based his decision on the contention that since no evidence of premeditated concerted action to tear down the swastika flag was adduced—the act, in the opinion of the magistrate, being evidently a spontaneous act of disorderly conduct not named in the indictment—no unlawful assembly in fact took place. With this legal position it is not possible to quarrel. But when Magistrate Brodsky, in presuming to set forth the sentiments of the defendants which urged them to commit what was in effect an act of violence against a nation with which the United States is on diplomatically friendly terms, proceeded in his official capacity to describe that nation in highly uncomplimentary language, one may question not only the diplomatic policy but the judicial propriety of such a procedure. It is the function of a judge to uphold and interpret the law; it is not his function to make political speeches from the bench. To the German government the case must seem very simple: an act of violence was committed; it was not only not punished, but a local official took occasion to utter caustic and bitter criticism. If Magistrate Brodsky felt that under the law he had no recourse except to free the defendants, he had every right to say so. If he felt bitterly about the Nazi regime, it would have been better for him to have said as much in his private capacity as an American citizen exercising his rights of free speech in Madison Square Garden, where he would have been assured of an appreciative audience.

THE EXTENT to which Japan has consolidated its political and economic suzerainty over North China is revealed in a number of recent events. The Japanese have even gone so far as to demand that a Chinese who is accused of murdering a Chinese official be handed over to the Japanese military for punishment. Another Chinese official who is alleged to be involved in the affair is being held illegally in the Japanese Embassy in Peiping. A demand has been lodged with Wang Ke-min, pro-Japanese head of the Peiping Political Committee, that the demilitarized zone be separated from Hopei Province, and that a new government be set up for the five northernmost provinces of China—Hopei, Shantung, Shansi, Chahar, and Suiyuan. In pursuance of this project Japanese military officers have flown their planes to Paotingfu and Taiyuanfu, provincial capitals hundreds of miles south of the demilitarized area, where they have outlined their scheme for placing the whole of North China under a puppet government. As a result of this "improvement in Sino-Japanese relations," the Tokyo press reports that Japanese residents in the northern Chinese provinces are to be given "more privileges, including business and residential rights." In industrial and business establishments foreign and Chinese employees, particularly in the higher-salaried ranks, are being gradually replaced by Japanese. Since the Chinese government is not allowed to maintain troops north of the Yellow River, and all Chinese political activity is rigidly prohibited there, the distinction between supposedly autonomous North China and the puppet state of Manchoukuo is difficult to define. In contrast to Manchoukuo, however, the Chinese abdication of sovereignty over North China has been made virtually without protest. For the sake of retaining a tenuous hold on Central China, Chiang Kai-shek has passively allowed 80,000,000 of his fellow-citizens to be absorbed in the Japanese Empire.

THE $90,000,000 loan by the RFC to the Dawes bank in Chicago continues to serve as a parable for all students of things as they are. General Dawes had been head of the RFC, but retired in time for his bank, the Central Republic Bank and Trust Company, to receive a loan nearly as large as its entire liability. This demonstrated the truism that those nearest the trough get the deepest drink. Congress then passed a law prohibiting further loans to institutions whose officers had been directors of the RFC. The entire Dawes loan had been allocated before the law was passed, but $50,000,000 of it was disbursed six months later. Before making this disbursement the RFC took the precaution of obtaining four legal opinions from leading Chicago law firms as to the double liability of the bank's stockholders. One of these firms was that of Winston, Strawn, and Shaw, of which Silas H. Strawn, a former president of the American Bar Association, is a member. Mr. Strawn and his associates, for a fee of $500, assured the RFC that the stockholders were liable under the Illinois law for double the amount of their share-

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holdings. So also did Pam and Hurd, though as counsel of the bank they received no fee. Now both these firms are appearing for stockholders contesting their liability. The RFC so far has collected some $25,000 of the twice $14,000,000 to which it has been assured it has a legal claim. The lesson here demonstrated is that opinions of law follow the fee, no matter how eminent the lawyer. But this does not exhaust the parable. John A. Lynch, vice-president of the bank and signer of the application for the loan, certified that the bank's assets were sufficient to repay the government loan. Now he is suing to prevent any repayment of the $50,000,000 on the ground that it was disbursed in violation of the RFC act. The moral here is that the government, in bailing out a bank, ought not to expect repayment as a matter of ethics. Bankers should be rescued and the taxpayers should foot the bill.

NEGOTIATIONS for tariff reciprocity between the United States and Canada have made little progress, if we are to judge by the correspondence between Secretary Hull and W. D. Herridge, Canadian minister at Washington, recently made public by the State Department. Although the Canadian government is known to have approached the Administration in the early days of March, 1933, with a proposal to institute immediate negotiations, formal diplomatic discussions appear to have begun only about a month ago. The delay is the more unaccountable in view of the fact that the Administration's tariff-bargaining program stands or falls on its ability to obtain an agreement with our neighbor to the north. As the chief source of American imports and, next to Great Britain, our best customer, Canada occupies a more important place in our trade than the whole of South America, Africa, and Oceania combined. The difficulties involved in reaching an agreement are admittedly serious. Canada is particularly interested in finding markets for its wheat, timber, copper, cattle, dairy products, and coal—all of which compete to a certain extent with American products. The concessions which it may offer in exchange for possible American grants are limited by the Ottawa agreements. Nevertheless, Mr. Herridge's letter, written last November, indicates a substantial basis for mutual concessions. If the Administration had been sincere in its efforts to break down existing trade barriers, it would have taken the Canadian proposal as ground for immediate discussion and attempted to bring about further mutual tariff reductions.

WE HEARTILY WELCOME the news that California is to have a genuinely liberal newspaper, sponsored by a committee of prominent San Francisco citizens and backed by a number of the leading labor unions. There is no state in the union where the forces of reaction are more deeply intrenched, and none where the progressive element is more desperately in need of courageous and sane leadership. California is in a sense a proving ground for fascism in the United States. If the irresponsible vigilante movement can be checked there, the entire country will breathe easier. If, on the other hand, the influence of Hearst and his allies should go unchallenged, there would be serious danger that fascism would sweep like a plague over the country. For this reason we hail a paper that promises to oppose vigorously all restrictions on civil liberty, and to stand unflinchingly for union labor, adequate unemployment insurance, public ownership of utilities, and complete academic freedom. Under competent editorship such a paper can do much to crystallize the vague liberal sentiment reflected in Sinclair's 800,000 votes into a powerful, intelligent radical movement capable of placing California once more in the ranks of the progressive states.

SOME YEARS AGO Messrs. Mencken and Nathan devised a scale by means of which the seeker after self-knowledge could measure the closeness of his approach to the ideal of 100 per cent Americanism. If, for example, he believed all Germans—this was just after the war—liked to skewer babies, he got five points; if he took cheese with apple pie, he got two more, and so on. Now, without acknowledgment and with all the seriousness of which a mental tester is capable, a professor at Washington University has just presented to the American Psychological Association a similar method for asserting how conservative or how radical any individual should be called. According to the account in the New York *Times* there are several hundred questions, but the few that are cited seem sufficient to give the idea. If you assent to the proposition, "Alimony for divorced husbands is as logical as alimony for divorced wives," you are verging toward the pink. If, on the other hand, you agree that "it is bad for a married man to take another man's wife to the movies," you are just that far qualified for membership in the Liberty League. There is no suggestion of what it should be taken to indicate if the subject says in both cases, "Well, it all depends." Perhaps he should be rated "Normally Intelligent."

"WE HAVE NO RIGHTS which anyone need respect." These words, which we quote from the article in the present issue by H. L. Mitchell and J. R. Butler, indicate better than whole volumes of statistics the desperate condition of the Southern share-cropper. In the past eighteen months the New Deal, in the form of the acreage-reduction program, has come to the plantation, only to intrench the landlord and reduce the share-cropper, in many instances, to the status of a day laborer. Appeals to Washington have been worse than useless, for although a genuine investigation was secured, thus raising hopes for redress, the report of that investigation was suppressed and it was one factor in the sensational "purge" of the AAA, in the course of which any friends the share-cropper might have counted on were summarily dismissed. But the New Deal has had one good effect. It has taught the share-cropper the necessity of cooperation with his fellow-sufferers, both black and white, and it has established on a firm basis such organizations as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which centers mainly in eastern Arkansas, and the Share-Croppers' Union in Alabama. The Tenant Farmers' Union, by an overwhelming vote, has decided to strike for the pitiful wage of $1 a hundred pounds for picking cotton. The terror, official and unofficial, which they may confidently expect to meet with is all too well revealed in the report from Alabama (which also appears in this issue), where members of the Share-Croppers' Union are already on strike. It hardly needs to be added that any contribution, from one dollar up, will be joyfully received. *The Nation* will be glad to forward such contributions to the organization designated.

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Geneva Stands Firm

THE world has become so accustomed to inaction, compromise, and oratory at Geneva that it finds it difficult to take seriously the League's present efforts to avert Italian aggression in Ethiopia. After the experience with committees in the Sino-Japanese dispute, the selection of another conciliation committee seems almost equivalent to giving Mussolini *carte blanche* to conduct the war as he sees fit. Yet if we could rid ourselves of this defeatist attitude, we should find the developments at Geneva during the recent Council session not altogether disheartening. True, the League procrastinated as usual. But this situation is unlike the Manchurian crisis in that delay is now an achievement to be desired. In 1931 the League was confronted with the accomplished fact of Japanese aggression. Delay merely allowed Japan to occupy larger and larger sections of China. But as yet, at least, Mussolini has not taken affairs into his own hands—because of the rainy season—and there is reason to hope that Italy will not attack as long as negotiations continue. As military operations can be carried out only during seven months of the year, a postponement of sixty to ninety days might put off the war for at least another year. Every week that the Italian soldiers are forced to remain in unhealthy camps in Eritrea and Somaliland will tend to dampen their enthusiasm for war.

A more substantial reason for encouragement lies in the growing sentiment against Fascist imperialism throughout the whole of Europe. The resolution adopted at the special joint conference of the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labor and Socialist International, calling for the application of sanctions against Italy, was in line with earlier action by British and French workers. In France not only the Socialists and Communists but to an increasing extent the center parties have been urging Laval to back up the League. Faced with the prospect of an early general election, the British government dares not ignore the implications of the recent peace poll with its 10,000,000 pro-sanctions vote. The Tories are perhaps even more concerned over Italy's potential threat to Egypt and the sea road to India. M. Litvinov, speaking for the Soviet Union, has characterized Italy's stand as a threat to "the whole edifice of international peace and the security of nations," and has urged the Council "not to stop short of any efforts . . . which may avert armed conflict." The smaller countries, with the exception of Mussolini's puppet government in Austria, have likewise shown an encouraging disposition to rally to the support of the League. Somewhat belatedly it has been recognized that if Italy is allowed to ignore its obligations under the League Covenant, the one support of peace in Europe will have been destroyed.

The pivotal question is whether Mussolini has gone so far that he could not turn back even if he wished to. Baron Aloisi's inflammatory speech at the opening of the Council session certainly left no loophole for possible compromise. Visitors who have recently returned from Italy picture the country as completely at the mercy of war psychology. To back down suddenly in the face of world opposition might seriously endanger Mussolini's dictatorship. On the other hand, Italy is obviously in no position to resist sanctions if they are rigorously applied, and is even less able to go to war with any of the big powers over their application. As was pointed out in last week's issue of *The Nation,* Italy is perhaps the farthest from self-sufficiency of any of the major countries. Faced by the certainty of a stringent financial and commercial boycott, combined with the threat of a closing of the Suez Canal, Mussolini would be practically forced to seek some face-saving compromise. While such a step might weaken his hold at home, it is difficult to believe that with full control of the press, radio, and other vehicles of public opinion Mussolini could not camouflage his retreat in such a way as to retain public support. But of course he cannot be expected to show signs of weakening as long as he feels that there is a chance of bluffing the League out of applying sanctions.

Under these circumstances it is difficult to say whether Secretary Hull's prompt action in forcing the Standard Oil Company to cancel its lease in Ethiopia is a gain or loss to peace. That the action reflects a commendable zeal in protecting the United States against unscrupulous private interests who would not hesitate to plunge the country into war is undeniable. The mere fact that the American people have advanced to the stage where they recognize some of the basic causes of war is of great significance. But if Secretary Hull's action means that the United States is simply to wash its hands of the Ethiopian affair, hoping against hope that it will not develop into a general conflict in which we might be involved, the consequences may be disastrous. This does not exonerate the Standard Oil Company of callously subjecting the United States to danger of war, but suggests that possibly an economic interest may be necessary before we bestir ourselves for peace. A strong stand at Washington in defense of the Kellogg pact might easily turn the scales in Geneva. An aloof, save-our-own-skins attitude, on the other hand, virtually ties the League's hands.

The situation in which the Council finds itself is far from a comfortable one. Moral pressure is useless against a shrewd, determined dictator with whom glorification of force is almost an obsession. Mild sanctions would be equally futile. Italy would not be particularly embarrassed by an arms embargo, and might even be able to withstand a boycott. Other economic and financial measures would be of little value without the active aid of the United States and other non-League powers. The one move that Italy is desperately afraid of is the closing of the Suez Canal. But this presents serious legal and political difficulties which might lead to war. Any action of the League in condemnation of Italy will involve the destruction of the Stresa front and may drive Mussolini into the arms of Hitler. Yet above and beyond these very real difficulties lies the indisputable fact that failure to curb Italy means the end of all possibility of security. It implies an acceptance by the world at large of the principles of force and violence which are the keystone of fascism, and relegates to the next post-war generation our rightful task of building an effective organization for peace.

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The President Completes the Record

THE outline for next year's campaign is already drawn. It will be a defense of the record of the New Deal. In his letter to Roy Howard the President announces that his reform program has "reached substantial completion." "It was necessary," he writes, "to seek a wise balance in American life, to restore our banking system to public confidence, to protect investors in the security market, to give labor freedom to organize and protection from exploitation, to safeguard and develop our national resources, to set up protection against the vicissitudes incident to old age and unemployment, to relieve destitution and suffering, and to relieve investors and consumers from the burden of unnecessary corporate machinery." He goes on to remark that he does not believe any responsible political party will dare go before the public in opposition to any of these major objectives, a challenge to the Republicans to meet him on the ground of his solutions for these problems. If we thought the Republicans would do so we should anticipate the campaign with more hope than we are able to feel. The platform ought to be one on which the nation is agreed, and the President ought to be measured by his success in realizing it. But the Republicans will not meet him on this ground. They will disparage him as an innovator, a meddler with the Constitution, and an enemy of private business, and there will be little wise discussion either of principles or remedies. The President will be under fire as a social philosopher rather than as an executive, and the issue of whether he has done well what he set out to do will hardly arise. This ought to be the final issue, and it should determine his right to a second term.

Of the President's objectives, only one has been reached. He has restored confidence in the banks as depositories of the public's savings. He has made a beginning of destroying unnecessary corporate machinery in the holding-company law. But remarkable as was his success in getting this passed by Congress, he won a legislative victory only; it remains to be seen how the law will be administered. The Securities and Exchange Act also was a legislative victory, but its administration on the whole has been less than satisfactory. The President has been far less successful with the other items of his program. His social legislation has been pitifully inadequate, and one must wonder whether the old-age-pension and unemployment-insurance systems, as finally voted, are not worse than no legislation whatever. The Wagner labor-disputes law will be claimed as a Presidential triumph, though he deserves little credit for its passage. After whittling away his own promises to labor for two years of his term, his only role in getting this law passed was to accept it belatedly, make room for it on his list of bills, and sign it when it was passed. The measure succeeded largely because it was thrown into Congress at the moment when the NRA was declared unconstitutional, and Congressmen knew that labor would be dangerously angry if it lost the safeguards pledged in the recovery legislation.

As to the relief of destitution, the President is in a characteristic plight of having been humane in his impulses and foolish in his expression of them. That the nation as a whole has assumed responsibility for the destitute is of historic importance. But one would be put to it to conjure up greater folly than the government's spending program. It begins with the formal abandonment of the six million able-bodied unemployed not on relief. It is morally wrong in two particulars: first, in condemning these unemployed to take the plunge into formal destitution before they can receive aid, and then in teaching those on the dole that there is something ethical about the state creating artificial chores for them to perform at less than standard wages.

Genuine public works have gone by the board in satisfying this perverse morality, with far-reaching consequences. Heavy industry and building are not being enough stimulated by the vast outlay of money, but, still worse, the future of public works is being thrown away. A planned program of public works may be the one device by which reformed capitalism can counteract the business cycle and postpone its death sentence. But after watching Mr. Hopkins, with admirable efficiency, frittering away the public money on trifling projects, the public will not believe that public works are either sound or practicable. And the net result of the President's administration of spending is to drive us back on private enterprise as being of greater value than the creation of work, which means that we shall be saddled with a vast and permanent army of the unemployed. The President promises "a wise balance of American economic life." Instead, his policy is developing an economy in which business is learning to earn profits in a depression, the capitalist class enjoys a rising income, production steadily rises, and unemployment slowly but steadily grows. To set the achievements of the New Deal against this undeniable economic fact is to see how ominously short it is falling.

The best to be said for the President is that he has attacked some of the problems. Most of his plans have had to be compromised, owing in part to the generally reactionary temper of the majority of Congress and the Democratic Party, and in part to his eagerness to accept little victories if they can be had without a fight. That he also could have won bigger battles he demonstrated in the holding-company fight. Some of the same doggedness shown earlier in his term would have been still more fruitful. Had it been devoted, for instance, to pushing through the public-works program, we should now have a gain in employment as well as profits. But the President has no flair for economics, and probably does not even see the tragic implications of Mr. Hopkins's work-relief theories.

We repeat, we do not believe the President's record is going to be criticized intelligently in the coming campaign. Instead, he will be blamed for his intentions, which in the main have been admirable. His Republican opponent is almost certain to be a man without even a social outlook. If the choice before the public is between the President and such a Republican, Mr. Roosevelt should be able to count on reelection.

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National Defense and Thought

"AROUSING call by Governor Lehman for a more adequate national defense as the best guaranty of peace brought a cheering state American Legion convention to its feet here today," ran a Rochester dispatch of August 30 to the New York *Times*. There followed these familiar words from the Governor's speech: "Nobody is less a militarist than I. But insistence on preparedness is not militarism. It is the opposite. It is my considered conviction that adequate defense is the surest way to peace." Now if *The Nation* were in the habit of starting prize contests we should feel like offering a large reward for the best explanation of why it is that in no political or social group is there such conventionality, such a constant repetition of meaningless phrases, as among the defenders of national preparedness when they discuss their favorite subject.

Take Governor Lehman. Does anyone believe that he or anyone else could possibly define "adequate defense"? Against whom? Against what? Against a single enemy? Against two nations striking hands against us? Not for a million dollars could Governor Lehman or anyone else say just when our army and navy can be "properly trained and equipped for *any eventuality*," to cite his words again. Any eventuality? Well, that includes, of course, the possibility of a holy war against us by the League of Nations. It means that we must be prepared for a joint war upon us by Japan, Russia, and England. Some militarists even foresee the arming of all China, and a war of yellow men against white, with the United States as its first objective. Would the Governor have us arm for that?

Of course if Governor Lehman had really stopped to think the thing through he would have reflected that carrying out his program would mean the devotion of all our national efforts to creating a nation in arms similar to that now being developed by Adolf Hitler, with the subordination of every national activity to that end. He might even have inquired what country was ever saved from war by any defense. Before speaking as he did the Governor might even have asked himself how many countries there are in the world with navies adequate to cope with our own. He would have found that there are two, Japan and Great Britain, and he would have ascertained that Japan does not possess a sufficiently large fleet of transports to land upon our shores, with the necessary supplies and equipment, ammunition, motor vehicles, and gases, more than a small fraction of the two millions of men that we placed in France. If he is one of those who dread an attack by the Japanese, it might be well to ask him to furnish an instance in which a fleet ever fought a war seven thousand miles from its base.

The trouble plainly is that the Governor did not think. He is not aware that for more than one hundred years of our national history we were unarmed, unafraid, and unattacked, although our coasts were defenseless. If he read his history aright he would learn that we were never in so little danger of attack as during those defenseless years. But politicians of this type do not wish to read or know. They seek only the applause of unthinking audiences.

Peace by Prayer

FROM Shanghai there arrived in our morning mail a communication and a pamphlet which have left us bemused. The letter-head reads, "World Peace Prayer Conference for the Exposition of Confucian Cosmopolitanism," and down the side is a list of committee members, including the chairman of the National Famine Relief Association, the chairman of the Hunan Provincial Government, the chairman of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce, and other equally important functionaries. In retrospect we are inclined to feel that nothing in the whole extraordinary business is quite so extraordinary as the fact that careful search reveals no appeal for funds. But one may choose one's favorite item from the catalogue of wonders.

The letter (incidentally, it is printed on good twentieth-century bond paper and provided with a typewritten salutation like any up-to-date sales letter) begins as follows:

> In view of the present competition in military equipment among the nations accelerating the crisis of another World War, we have proposed to invite the Great Teacher, Tuan Sze-tsun, to give a series of lectures on the Truth of Confucius's Cosmopolitanism and to pray for world peace. By doing so we hope to arouse the interest of all people in world peace so as to nip the evil in the bud.

Included is an appeal by the women's subcommittee which repudiates as grossly practical a peace plan based upon the proposal that wives should, Lysistrata-like, deny themselves to persistently bellicose husbands, and which pleads for faith based on the fact that when Buddha expounded the truths of Buddhism even the stony-hearted nodded their heads.

But the chief exhibit is a pamphlet devoted to the Great Teacher himself. In his fifteenth year Tuan Sze-tsun reached a state of illumination so intense that "without reading the books of the ancients he was able to penetrate the classical teachings, and without reading the books of today he was able to understand the political conditions in the nations of today." "Difficulties, personal or social, can be eliminated with his intervention." When, for instance, no longer ago than 1934, the drought-stricken inhabitants of Chekiang Province sent him a telegram asking for rain, he produced it instantly; but, generally speaking, the Great Teacher is not inclined to bother with such piecemeal measures. The frontispiece is a picture of Tuan Sze-tsun himself—a wise, benign, and intelligent sage. In sober truth a world composed of men like him would in all probability have no problems.

Sometimes we feel that realistic students of war and peace are almost too realistic; but perhaps there is no happy medium, and we also feel that Christians and Buddhists wander slightly from their own principles when they assume that their way is a way not only of endurance but also of practical results. When Jesus advised us to give the coat also he did not say that it would not be taken; and when he advised turning the other cheek he did not say that it would not be struck. Even if the pen is mightier than the sword it may not be mighty in the same way. We are loath to believe that God is on the side of the biggest guns, but we are not sure that he is on that of the loudest, the most continuous, or even the most earnest prayers.

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Issues and Men

A Notable Conference

A CONFERENCE of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews to "analyze and allay the prejudices which exist among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews" in this mad world seems surprising, especially when the tide of anti-Semitism is rising in the United States, as are other prejudices also. Yet the Institute of Human Relations, held at Williamstown, Massachusetts, from August 25 to August 30, was a notable success from almost every point of view. The size of the attendance—nearly 700 persons registered when at first only 100 were expected—proves that such a conference was desired. But it is far more important that the discussions were on a remarkably high level, that there were some unusual speeches, a real exchange of sentiments, and a few clashes of opinion—the best sign that a conference is not cut and dried.

I do not know what there is in the American mind that so dreads controversy. Some years ago I presided at a meeting held to listen to a distinguished Englishman, who made what I thought was an excellent speech and seemed to please the audience. As we walked away he was much depressed. "Evidently," he said, "I made a very bad speech." "Not at all," said I, "what makes you think so?" "Why," he replied sadly, "I was not heckled once." I explained to him that in conforming America heckling is considered very rude and that many would have considered his address a failure if there had been even two interruptions. I might have added that heckling and dissent are so rare over here that, if any such thing happens, the newspapers play it up in the headlines as if it were something scandalous. So the few dissents at Williamstown received considerable attention from the press; the pro-Nazi speech of a German woman was sensationalized, and a certain amount of unrest among the Catholic members was turned into a genuine threat to bolt the conference because they were not given adequate time to refute the, to them, unjustifiable statements of Ramon Beteta, the brilliant, passionate, and eloquent advocate of the policies of the Mexican government. So far as the press was concerned, this was an unusually self-conscious conference. The reports of the proceedings in the New York dailies were carefully read and usually resented, and the excellent round table on the press, ably presided over by George Fort Milton of the Chattanooga *News*, gave a large part of its time to discussing how such a conference could be correctly reported with adequate emphasis upon the real spirit and achievements of the gathering and without the eternal magnifying of incidents smacking of the unusual or sensational. There was especial joy when the New York *Times* in one of its reports stated that George Fort Milton was editor of the Chattanooga *Times*. The joke was that the Chattanooga *Times* is owned by the New York *Times* itself, whereas Mr. Milton is the editor of the *News*.

As for the addresses, it was worth going to Williamstown to hear the admirable speech of President Frank Porter Graham of the University of North Carolina, a document that every conservative ought to read because of its carefully reasoned presentation of the case for social control in this country and its arguments for modernizing our Constitution and our government. If Mr. Roosevelt is wise he will make this exhibit number one in behalf of the New Deal in the campaign a year hence. But the prize for brilliance goes to Mr. Beteta. He was the only speaker on his side, with a number of men on the other, but he put his opponents to their trumps, and, in the case of one man, affected him so deeply as to produce the only uncalled-for and barbed utterance of the entire conference. Highly significant of the tone and point of view of those attending was the applause given to Mr. Beteta's description of the aims of the Mexican revolution, especially his assertion that it is an Indian revolution, for the benefit of the country's rightful owners. The statements of the three members of the Committee on the Rights of Religious Minorities who presented their views in advance of the writing of their official report on Mexico, Professor Philip Marshall Brown, Carl Sherman of New York, and Professor William Franklin Sands of Washington, were models of careful reasoning.

There were lecture courses in history, economics, sociology, and anthropology to apply the social sciences to inter-group relations, and round tables, in addition to that on the press, on the College Campus, Women's Organizations, Religious Education, Organizing the Community for Social Change, and Public Schools and Other Character-Building Agencies, the latter under the chairmanship of Professor Herbert A. Miller of Bryn Mawr, whose address on Human Relations in Russia, 1910 and 1935, was also one of the striking events of the conference. Jacob Billikopf's description of the work done in the Philadelphia district by the Labor Relations Board, and I. M. Rubinow's talk on Social Security and Inter-Group Relations were also noteworthy. In fairness I ought to enumerate nearly all the talks, but not Governor Lehman's superficial discussion of The American Tradition of Civil and Religious Freedom. What a pity it is that an organization like this, or some similar one, cannot organize a See America First caravan, and show some of our Governors and Senators a few of the things happening in this country that might well give the Governor pause before telling us so facilely that civil and religious freedom are in no real danger in the United States, and that the American tradition will be preserved. Finally I must add that Newton D. Baker presided with great skill and tact, and in an admirable spirit, over most of the meetings. Altogether it was a heartening five days since it showed that there remains a reservoir of good-will and devotion to American ideals which can yet be marshaled into a vigorous defense of the most worth-while things in American life, especially in the field of inter-group relationships.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Racketeering in the A. F. of L.

II. Skulduggery in New York

By ISIDOR FEINSTEIN

THE leaders of the American Federation of Labor manifest a peculiar attitude toward misgovernment, corruption, and racketeering in the federation's trade unions. Unless and until public pressure becomes too strong, they decline to take action on the ground that the federation has no power to take similar action in the case of its constituent Internationals. Yet the same leaders act in the most forceful manner for the expulsion of "radical" or "Communist" groups within the ranks. In practice this means that the A. F. of L. leadership is usually lined up on the side of the racketeers, for those who oppose the racketeers are always stigmatized as "reds" no matter how pale their actual political convictions or affiliations may be. This two-faced policy is an old one. It is William Green's policy and it was Samuel Gompers's.

The racketeer Sam Parks was imported from Chicago by the Fuller Construction Company to "organize" labor in the building industry in New York and was sent to Sing Sing for blackmail by William Travers Jerome. There was no protest from Gompers when Parks emerged from Sing Sing to head the A. F. of L. Labor Day parade in New York in 1903. Nor did Gompers take any action, such as threatening to revoke the charter of the New York Building Trades Council, to oust its president, Robert P. Brindell. Yet the Lockwood Committee and its counsel, Samuel Untermyer, showed that Brindell had organized a wreckers' union of his own in opposition to one chartered by the A. F. of L., that the A. F. of L. did nothing to protect its own union, and that Brindell's "independent" union was the chief instrument by which he was enabled to terrorize the building workers and the building industry in New York for many years and to mulct it of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Nor did Gompers ever act on the Lockwood Committee's finding that one of the chief evils in the A. F. of L. unions was the result of constitutions and by-laws which placed the membership of the unions at the mercy of their officers. The committee recommended a set of model by-laws. The recommendation was ignored. By-laws are worse today than they were then.

But Gompers could be implacable in dealing with militants, insurgents, and progressives. He hounded the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, formed before the war as a result of rank-and-file dissatisfaction with the leadership of the United Garment Workers, and at one time affiliated with the United Hebrew Trades of New York City. Gompers appeared personally at a meeting of the United Hebrew Trades to demand the expulsion of the Amalgamated. When this was refused, he had to work in a roundabout way since the U. H. T. held no charter from the A. F. of L. He first ordered the expulsion of the U. H. T. from the Federation of Central Bodies in New York, which did have a federation charter. Then he threatened to take away the charter of every A. F. of L. union affiliated with the United Hebrew Trades unless the latter expelled the Amalgamated. The Amalgamated finally withdrew. United Garment Workers acted as strike-breakers against the Amalgamated with the approval of the A. F. of L. for many years, and it was not until the period of the NRA and the ascendancy of Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated, in NRA councils that the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America were finally admitted into the American Federation of Labor.

Green's and Woll's fulminations against the A. F. of L. furriers for merging with the left-wing furriers' group are in the same tradition. Equally so is their attitude toward racketeering in the A. F. of L. When Henry Godel, a member of the rank-and-file opposition in Local 3 of the Electrical Workers, was murdered in June, 1933, and the local passed a resolution offering a reward for the apprehension of his slayer, neither Green nor Woll protested against the vetoing of that resolution by the president of the International. Nor is it likely that Green would have interfered with Sam Kaplan in Local 306 of the Movie Operators if there had not been a flood of newspaper publicity and court actions. Legal action began against Kaplan as early as January, 1929, when an accounting was sought for $30,000 or $40,000 which Kaplan had collected from union members for a strike fund to support a strike that was never called. The special resolution calling for the assessment—it amounted to one week's pay per worker—specified that the money was to be returned if there was no strike. Instead of returning the money Kaplan voted himself $20,000 and his nearest lieutenant, Harry Sherman, $5,000, and divided the rest among lesser henchmen. It was not until the spring of 1932, after the newspapers had made the leadership of Local 306 notorious, that William Green sent Edward F. McGrady to investigate, and it was not until the following autumn that Kaplan was finally brought to trial before his International. The sensation created by the appearance of Kaplan before Justice McCook with four armed bodyguards brought a public outcry that made whitewash impossible. Kaplan was finally convicted by his own International and later went to jail on charges of coercion and conspiracy. The charges on which Kaplan was convicted by his International, as stated in an affidavit by William C. Elliott, its president, included collection of $800,000 a year without proper bookkeeping "and with vast sums of money unaccounted for." It was also charged "that he was an employer of non-union labor . . ., that he could not properly represent the union in its dealings with exhibitors because of his position as president of the Sam Kaplan Manufacturing Company, which company sold to exhibitors motion-picture supplies and parts . . ., that he had discriminated in wage-scale contracts with exhibitors in favor of such exhibitors as favored his company, the Sam Kaplan Manufacturing Company, by purchases of supplies from such company." He was also convicted of using violence and terrorism, oppressing and expelling rank-and-file opponents, and

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refusing to reinstate them even after reinstatement was ordered by the courts. The concluding charge was "that he had brought Local 306 and organized labor in general into public disrepute." President Elliott then brought labor further into disrepute by naming Kaplan's chief lieutenant, Harry Sherman, recipient of the $5,000 from the strike fund, as Kaplan's successor. A rank-and-file revolt finally ousted Sherman.

Another abuse which was pointed out at least as far back as the Lockwood Committee report but which has yet to draw the fire of the A. F. of L. hierarchy is the use of union funds to defend crooks and gangsters against charges of helping themselves to these same funds. A typical case is that of William A. Hogan. As a result of the Lockwood Committee's revelations Hogan was sent to jail for grand larceny for stealing $30,000 from the treasury of his union. The Lockwood Committee later found that other officers of the union, Local 3 of the Electrical Workers, had spent $19,000 of the union's money defending Hogan. On Hogan's release from jail the official put in charge of the local by the International to clean it up made Hogan secretary-treasurer. When the rank and file finally got rid of Hogan, he was named treasurer of the International. Other "reforms" in the International's clean-up of Local 3 were a new constitution and new by-laws which gave the officers absolute power over the jobs of the union members. Under one of the new provisions several members were fined $300 each for discussing affairs of the union outside regular meetings of the local. The presence of gangsters at meetings of the local had made it impossible for the rank and file to speak freely there. Also involved in the same scandal was Jacob Solomon, who remained an officer of the union even after he testified before a court referee that he had secretly and in the dead of night destroyed the books of the union showing the expenditure of about $1,500,000.

Rank-and-file victories are not easily won. The long struggle against Philip Zausner in District Council 9, Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paper Hangers of America, for the boroughs of Manhattan, Bronx, and Richmond, is a case in point. A citizens' committee for the investigation of conditions in the painters' union, headed by Professor Paul Brissenden of Columbia, is now investigating election methods that are said to make Tammany look genteel. The struggle against Zausner has been going on for several years. The rank and file complain of gangsterism, discrimination, kickback, failure to enforce wage scales, crooked elections, and dictatorial rule. Louis Weinstock, leader of the opposition, and some twenty-five others were expelled in 1933 on charges of slandering the officers of the union. They were reinstated later in that year by court order, and in 1934 Weinstock was the rank-and-file candidate against Zausner for the most powerful office in the council, that of secretary-treasurer. An amusing feature of the Weinstock-Zausner fight was Zausner's charge that the rank-and-file opposition was both Communist and Nazi. In addressing Jewish locals the Zausner partisans accused the rank and file of Nazism and in addressing Gentile locals of communism. The charge of Nazism was based on the fact that Weinstock's local, 499, is largely a German local. Since Weinstock is Jewish and had the support of his local in his campaign for the office of secretary-treasurer, 499 could hardly be Nazi.

Tammany bosses could learn from the affidavits filed with the courts about the elections of 1934 and 1935 in District Council 9. In 1934 the seven locals of the council in which no irregularities were charged polled an average of 68.84 per cent of the certified membership. In the five locals in which irregularities were alleged to have occurred, the average vote cast in each was 96.76 per cent of the certified membership, although in three of these locals the polls were closed for a large part of the voting day. Why the polls were closed for part of the day, although the by-laws provide that they must be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., is explained by the misfortune that befell the enthusiasts in Local 261. The certified membership of Local 261 is 1,062. The total number of votes cast was 1,105. The polls at Local 905 were closed for four and a half hours on election day, but votes were cast for or by 969 of the 980 certified members. Sworn affidavits assert that several hundred persons were denied the right to vote, much of the voting allowed being done by repeaters.

Voting machines were used in these elections. They are a great convenience for repeaters. Weinstock watchers were either ignored or thrown out. In many cases "watchers" were so placed that they were unable to watch. A rank-and-file candidate for business agent protested that the vice-president of Local 442 not only acted in his official capacity as supervisor of the election but carried supervision to the point where he stood inside the voting booth and actually pulled the levers for the persons who entered. When the candidate complained, he was told that the men were too ignorant to vote without assistance. Herbert D. David, a Civil Liberties Union attorney, declares that he saw the handle on one voting machine pulled back from forty to fifty times while one voter was in the booth.

One watcher in Local 261 declared in his affidavit that he stopped a man who attempted to vote without showing his dues book. The man protested to the officer in charge of the election. The latter ruled that he was to vote first and show his card afterward. Under the constitution of the brotherhood a member is not entitled to vote if he is three months in arrears in his dues. When the voter emerged from the booth and finally showed his book, it was seen that he had not paid dues for six months. The officer in charge of the election "said that to make up for this improper vote he would exclude an eligible member from the right to vote"! Many had no dues book but merely showed a card from some official of the union asking that they be permitted to vote. One watcher saw a member vote forty-seven times for Zausner, but "because of the threats which had been made to deponent earlier by Charlie Kamins deponent was afraid to make any outcry in respect to this practice by Hymie Kamins [the repeater] and returned to his seat at the watchers' table."

Zausner is charged by the rank and file with winning the election against Harry Serra last June by much the same methods. A member of Local 261 described one scene in an affidavit:

> When I came inside the local hall I saw Harry Serra, who was a candidate for secretary-treasurer, protesting vainly against the disgraceful repeating that was taking place. Serra had just been beaten up and was in an exhausted condition. I saw two gangsters, Hymie Horowitz and Sam Jaffe, enter the voting booth with

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practically every man who voted. . . . Two more gangsters, known as Mike the Bum and Ching, were also in the voting room and were bossing those painters who tried to vote.

Another affidavit declared:

> Right after the voting started, a gangster known as "Yonkel Katsap," whose real name I believe is David Breen, entered the voting booth and, surrounded by about twenty people, commenced to record vote after vote as though he were playing a game on the voting machine. . . . While the so-called election was taking place, there was a police officer at the door. He was working jointly with a member of the group that was controlling the voting and before he would permit any member to enter the voting room to cast his vote, the policeman would cry out: "Is he O. K.?" If the man he was working with said yes, he was permitted to enter, and if it was no, the policeman kicked him out. Evidently the policeman's O. K. was not sufficient, because when the members did finally walk in to vote "Yonkel Katsap" went into the voting room and supervised the voting inside the booth.

Even when the rank and file seem on the verge of winning, strange things sometimes happen. John M. Schilling was for more than fifteen years executive secretary and financial secretary of Local 52, the United Housesmiths' Union of the Iron Workers. The rank and file claimed that there had been no accounting of union funds for about fifteen years. In the fall of 1932 the membership became insistent on an accounting. Schilling picked his own accountants. (He had kept union accounts in his own name.) Even from the report of his own accountants the rank and file suspected misapplication of funds. In April, 1933, a reform slate was put up for election against Schilling. Schilling first campaigned for reelection; then, a few days before the election was to be held, fearing defeat, he declared the election illegal. When this maneuver threatened to fail, he arranged with the General Executive Board of the International to order the election called off and to issue a charter for a new local, 447, with Schilling as executive secretary and treasurer. In the words of Justice John L. Walsh of the Supreme Court of New York, ". . . some time prior to April 29, 1933, and in anticipation of the results of the then impending election, John M. Schilling, Joseph Boyen, Charles Sheridan conspired together and with others to wreck Local 52, to deprive it of its property and property rights, and to convert the same to their own use or to the use of an organization to be formed or controlled by them." The court declared the charter of Local 52 improperly revoked and the contract between the local and the Allied Building Metal Industries still in force. Members who remained in Local 52, instead of transferring to the new local in obedience to the "advice" of the International, have been deprived of their rights under this contract. None of them have been able to get work because the Building Trades Council called a strike wherever a member of Local 52 obtained employment. The local is still fighting for enforcement of the court order. The rank and file here too were assailed as "Communists" by the leadership.

One of the complaints of the membership in the Housesmiths' Union was that there had been no meeting in two years. This is a fairly common complaint in certain sectors of the A. F. of L. Corrupt leadership maintains itself by holding as few meetings as possible, having gangsters present at meetings to frighten the rank and file from speaking, and often, when a meeting gets "out of control," adjourning it by simply turning off the lights in the hall. Failure to hold meetings is one of the complaints made by the rank and file in the Longshoremen's Union. *Shape-Up,* the four-page organ of the rank and file in the port of New York, runs a list of "Graveyard Locals. They Never Meet." *Shape-Up* is typical of the two- and four-page sheets being put out by the rank and file struggling to wipe out racketeering and restore honest trade unionism. One recent issue told how Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International—who lobbied against the Wheeler-Rayburn bill, raised his own salary after defeating Bridges at the recent convention, and sent Jimmy Walker a message to come back to New York—was defeated in his own local, 791. "A hot discussion took place regarding conditions on the docks, with Joe Ryan, who was present, taking plenty of hell." In the correspondence columns "Gus S." complains that the United Fruit men want to be organized but can't get the I. L. A. to take them in. "Pier 6, American Hawaiian," charges that men who complain of conditions on his pier to the union delegate are pointed out to the boss and fired. Another writes:

> Today on the payline (Pier 61, I. M. M.) one of the boys passed the collection box without dropping any money in. The gorilla at the box called, "Hey, you." This fellow had to come back and explain why he didn't contribute to the racket. His reason was: "I only made $7.60 this week." Said the gorilla: "Better get it up or get off this pier."

In Red Hook the men pay back as much as $2 for each ship they are allowed to work by the hiring stevedore.

The story of the struggle against dictatorship in the trade unions is a tragic and heroic one. Rank-and-file oppositionists risk their bread and butter and often their lives in the fight against the racketeers. At stake is the good name of the labor movement and the usefulness of the only instrument of protection that the worker has. The racket unions are in the minority but they blacken the reputation of the rest and provide ammunition to proto-fascist fakers of the Coughlin type. The maintenance of democratic control by the membership is the first essential for clean unionism. Another is that union leaders attend to the business of bargaining for the workers instead of trying to "stabilize" the industries in which they operate. Often well-intentioned, these attempts at "stabilization" are frequently nothing more than price-fixing conspiracies at the expense of the public and ultimately of the worker as well; they usually degenerate into business-labor rackets. Should there be greater judicial supervision over the management and constitutions of trade unions? When the question was put to Samuel Gompers by Samuel Untermyer as counsel for the Lockwood Committee, Gompers answered no. He feared the possible extension of court rule over the unions, and the dangers are obvious. But if capital can in the long run exert more influence on the courts than labor can, it can also often exert more influence on some labor leaders than the unions can. The alternative is drastic action by the A. F. of L. leadership to clean up its own ranks. Unfortunately Gompers never took such action. Neither has William Green taken any.

[*This is the last of Mr. Feinstein's articles on Racketeering in the A. F. of L.*]

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Bullets Fell on Alabama

By BRUCE CRAWFORD

OUR committee that went into Alabama to investigate abuses of civil liberties really was shot at, though Governor Bibb Graves asserts the contrary. We were not seeking publicity for ourselves, as the Governor told the press; we were seeking publicity for conditions which Alabama doesn't want uncovered.

The committee—myself from Virginia, Jack Conroy from Missouri, Emmett Gowen from Tennessee, Shirley Hopkins from Massachusetts, and Alfred H. Hirsch of New York, secretary of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, which organized the trip—went first to Birmingham to test the constitutionality of the Downs literature ordinance. This city law makes it a crime punishable by $100 fine and six months' imprisonment to possess more than one copy of a radical publication. We distributed copies of *The Nation,* the *New Republic,* the *New Theatre,* the *Labor Defender,* the *New Masses,* and the *Daily Worker* in front of the City Hall. For possessing copies of these publications more than sixty persons, white and Negro workers and their friends, had been arrested. Many, after being released, had been kidnapped by vigilantes and beaten up. The vigilantes are mainly corporation "dicks" who capitalize the race prejudice and hundred-per-centism of the ignorant population.

Although the press reported that Chief of Police Hollums "received" us with "measured courtesy," three of our group, myself included, were seized by city detectives and forcibly ushered into the City Hall. Miss Hopkins and Mr. Hirsch were finger-printed and photographed. An officer struck Hirsch on the ear when he refused to answer a question. But we "weren't arrested"!

Chief Hollums sidestepped a test of the ordinance. "This literature does not violate our law," he said, flipping the pages and barely noting headlines. I sat before him for an hour, asking as well as answering questions. Officers, reporters, and hostile onlookers crowded around. "If this literature doesn't violate your ordinance," I ventured, "why do your officers continue to arrest people for merely possessing it?"

"But we turn them loose," he hastily assured me with a smile.

"Yet such arrests break up their perfectly legal activities," I returned, "and after you do release them they are kidnapped and beaten. Can't you discourage these arrests?"

"Well," replied the chief, painfully smiling, "we have a certain element here, some anti-radicals, that do things we don't always approve of. This literature isn't unlawful, but it contains what offends some people. Besides, the ignorant working people shouldn't be allowed to read such literature. It stirs them up. Why, before these radicals began scattering such stuff, the nigger would come holding up his hands when a white man called to him. Now the niggers are uppity."

"Nobody, white or black, should have to come holding up his hands," I said. This sounded crazy to him.

"They're too ignorant to have this stuff," he added. When asked why they were ignorant, he guessed it was because they didn't read. When asked why they didn't read, he allowed it was "because they are too ignorant."

In came a detective with two typewritten sheets. "I took these out of that woman's handbag, Chief," he said, dutifully.

The chief ran his eyes down a page, but it was clear he didn't intend to find any unlawful dynamite. Miss Hopkins had volunteered to carry two circulars which went even farther in a revolutionary way than the publications. "They won't put a woman on the chain gang," she said. The circular was my composition, addressed to "Workers of Birmingham, white and Negro." It urged them to resist any war in which the rich would profit and the workers would do the fighting. It contained an obscure passage from Daniel Webster to the effect that liberties for the many vanish when wealth concentrates. No quotes were used, nor was Webster's name mentioned. Likewise a buried statement was lifted from Lincoln—this also was passed off as ours—to the effect that when government ceases to serve the majority of the people, they have not only the constitutional right to change it but even the revolutionary right to overthrow it. This made a hot circular—provocative enough to land a Birmingham steel worker in jail for life. But Chief Hollums's face reflected no red when he looked at it.

"You'll have to go stronger than this," he said to me, handing the sheets back to the detective. "Whoever wrote that was a shrewd constitutional lawyer."

Then with a glinty eye, "But if you continue to distribute such literature here, I won't be responsible for what may happen to you. You better not do it. I've known all about you every hour since your arrival yesterday."

I suggested that since he had us under surveillance and admitted we were in danger, he might protect as well as shadow us.

With an impatient smile he replied, "I haven't sufficient police force to guarantee you protection against certain elements here. There may be some in this room now, to hear what you are saying. If you pursue your activity here, I can't protect you, I'm sorry to admit."

A fellow standing near put in, "Chief, I heard a man down on the street say he'd like to punch this feller right then."

"Yes, they won't tolerate your activities. Our workers and niggers are satisfied. We don't approve of this kind of writing, though it's not unlawful. Now if you had advocated the assassination of myself or President Roosevelt, then we might have accommodated you in your test of the ordinance."

I started to leave—tentatively. He reached out a cordial hand. Others left. Reporters rushed out to peck out their afternoon stories. Chief Hollums became confidential. "You and I both know we have a wonderful country here, with radios and bathtubs in every home. Why, Roosevelt has brought about a revolution."

I hadn't come to argue politics or economics. "Chief

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Hollums, I'm interested at this time in the abuse of civil liberties. This Downs ordinance is used to stifle militant labor activity."

Hollums ignored the remark and went on about our wonderful country—where workers are so ignorant they can't be trusted with just any kind of literature. "Why, I was in Russia, and you don't know the poverty they have there!"

I inquired when he was in Russia. His answer was "in 1912." I observed that there had been a revolution since then and some changes, but he interrupted me to say that Birmingham workers were too well off to be affected by agitators.

Although Hollums had admitted he couldn't protect us—an open invitation to violence such as we feared—Governor Graves next day pretended that we were in no danger and refused us police protection when we reported that our car had been fired upon five or six times, two bullets hitting the fender. "A frame-up for publicity," he told the press, and offered as proof the fact that we could not give the license number of our assailants' car or other details. When you see a man pumping lead in your direction, you don't take out pencil and pad to jot down license number, make of car, or color of the eyes of the men in it. Instead, you are hypnotized by the murderous mien of the individual with the gun in his hand. The Governor investigated us rather than the lawless vigilantes responsible for the shooting. His district attorney and highway patrolmen held us for eight hours in a small-town hotel lobby while a crowd gathered to eye us malevolently. After being denied protection, we left our own car to be brought on by an attorney, and took bus, taxis, and a train until we had crossed into Tennessee.

We had been on our way to Montgomery to ask Governor Graves to veto the Alabama anti-sedition bill that lay on his desk. This measure made it unlawful, among other things, for two or more persons to congregate on the street under certain circumstances, or for anyone to have in his possession literature advocating the overthrow of the government by force or violence. Similar bills have been patterned after it in other states. On the next day after the shooting Governor Graves vetoed the measure, declaring, "We have sufficient laws to curb radicals now." But he vetoed it one day too late, and it became a law.

By this time the suppression of civil liberties in Alabama had been given a lot of publicity. Most of the newspapers of the state, while not concerned about the rights of workers, denounced the gag measure. The American Legion, which had had the bill introduced, piped down. Chagrined, the legislators repealed the law.

The Meaning of the Modern Drama

III. The American Tradition

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

IN the last previous article three facts were remarked: first, that the intellectual premises of such dramatists as Ibsen and Shaw had to be established in the minds of their audiences before the plays could be correctly comprehended; second, that the necessity of establishing these premises as they went along made inevitable a certain awkwardness in the plays themselves; third, that the educational work of the "new dramatists" was accomplished so quickly and so well that their most daring paradoxes tended to turn into platitudes with disconcerting rapidity. Before proceeding to the next phase of dramatic literature it remains to indicate briefly what these premises were.

Of course the individual dramatists differed considerably among themselves. Thus—to continue with the same two outstanding representatives of the movement—Shaw, at least, believed himself to be much more concerned with definite political doctrines than Ibsen ever was. He proclaimed his Fabian socialism and, ostensibly at least, had a definite political solution for each of his problems, while Ibsen disclaimed any political doctrine and boasted that his function was rather to ask questions than to answer them. Certainly, moreover, the cult of the new drama was not primarily a political one, and its devotees were united not by the common acceptance of any political program but by their eager championship of certain very general intellectual and moral attitudes, shared by Shaw and Ibsen as well as by nearly all the "new dramatists."

To catalogue these attitudes after so long a time is to emphasize their now platitudinous character, but they may be summarized somewhat as follows. The less smiling aspects of life are by no means less interesting, less significant, or less typical than the others. Unpleasant plays are quite as true as pleasant ones, and the first discovery made by anyone willing to open his eyes is the discovery that this is by no means the best of all possible worlds. Journeys do not always end in lovers' meetings, and whatever is, is not invariably right. The second discovery is that the most respectable people are the last either to admit the imperfection of society or make an effort to do anything about it. Church and state have united in the effort not to make righteousness prevail but to keep up appearances. Their first concern is not the establishment of justice but the prevention of scandal. The first—and last—question which they trouble to ask is merely, "What will people say?"

Inspired by these two convictions the dramatist turned to his analysis of the seamy side of life and made his central, ever-recurring theme the contrast between righteousness and respectability, between virtue and its hypocritical counterpart. The respectable retorted by crying "Shame," as though the iconoclasts were creating the evils to which they called attention. Upon that assumption William Winter could summarize his characterization of "Ghosts" as "a dirty deed done in public." Ibsen replied to such an attitude with "An Enemy of the People," in which the hu-

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manitarian hero is treated as though he had bred the disease germs which he finds in the municipal baths, and the battle was short and hot—so short, indeed, that it is only by referring to such criticism as Winter's that we can now believe how hot it was.

On the surface it was essentially a struggle between the ideal of decorum and the ideal of frankness. The advanced thinkers saw their opponents as engaged in a "conspiracy of silence," and they opposed the charge that their themes were essentially indecent with Ibsen's phrase about the mushrooms that grow in the dark. More deeply, however, it implied a conflict between tradition and reason as the accepted sanction of morality. Parson Manders justified the deceit which he practiced upon Oswald Alving by reference to the traditional injunction, "Honor thy father and thy mother." Mrs. Alving repudiated the generalization and insisted that one must first decide whether or not the egregious captain was worthy of honor. Her appeal was from the conventional generalization to the specific case, and that was, as a matter of fact, the usual technique of the new dramatist, whose determination it was to prove that only a stubborn reiteration of belief in traditional standards prevented new and different ones from imposing themselves.

From the standpoint of those interested chiefly in the evolution of moral ideas, the significance of the new drama lay, therefore, in its defense of the right of society to revise the bases of its moral judgments. But if one assumes that the primary desire of the playwright is to write plays, then it becomes evident that the arguments of an Ibsen had also, and perhaps primarily, a narrower purpose. Doubtless both he and Shaw had a large moral intention, but simply as dramatists they discovered that the stories they had to tell could be comprehended only in terms of the new morality they had accepted. Ibsen would have been compelled to argue even if he had happened to believe with all his heart in the doctrine of art for art's sake. One may say if one likes that he wanted his plays to be successful in order that he might teach. It is at least equally true, however, that he had to teach in order that his plays might become successful.

Once the premises of the new drama had been explained so often and so well that the public was capable of at least understanding the plays founded upon them, it was no longer necessary for the playwright to explain them again, and two possibly profitable courses remained open to him. On the one hand, he could become more completely and more frankly propagandist than he had been before, and taking up one after another such specific "problems" as formed the basis of "A Doll's House" or Brieux's "Damaged Goods," campaign directly for social reform. On the other hand, he could also now attempt to create a new classic drama—one, that is to say, which would exist primarily for the emotional experience which it was capable of providing but which, nevertheless, based itself upon the current premises instead of reviving for literary purposes various motives, beliefs, and standards of value or judgment which are now merely a part of history.

I have already said that I thought Shaw had tried to follow this second course. I must now add that, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, most of the best American playwrights of the last ten or twelve years have been working along the same lines. By comparison with Ibsen on the one hand or with one of the new "revolutionary" playwrights on the other, the majority of them may seem unaggressive and unoriginal. But if they are considered from a different point of view, if their work is taken to represent an effort to discover the purely dramatic value inherent in the intellectual and emotional atmosphere created by the late nineteenth-century transvaluation of values, then it comes to assume a very real significance of its own.

Let us take by way of simple illustration the piece written twelve years ago by Laurence Stallings and Maxwell Anderson, called "What Price Glory?" It was a striking and immediately successful work, but the controversy which broke out around it was concerned almost exclusively with the intellectual convictions of its authors. Was the play pro-war or anti; were its authors propagandists for pacifism or were they, as many were convinced, engaged in a pernicious romantic justification of a horrible institution? What they themselves would say upon the question I do not know, but to me it seems clear that the question was largely irrelevant. It could only be asked by an audience which had come to assume that a play must answer an abstract intellectual or moral question, and it was scarcely more sensible than it would be to ask what side of a certain other question Shakespeare was on when he wrote "Macbeth." Was he proclaiming that the female of the species is more deadly than the male; was he, in other words, an anti-feminist?

Of course the play could never have been written if the "new drama" had not lain behind it. In the first place, the ribald frankness of the language would not have been endured by an audience which had not been gradually accustomed to plain speaking by the more solemn audacities of the earlier playwrights. But that is by no means all. Only an audience which had achieved a far more inclusive repudiation of the ideal of respectability could accept as heroes such thoroughly unrespectable characters; only an audience for whom long-established ideological complexes involving patriotism, courage, and honor had completely disintegrated could have comprehended, much less accepted, the attitudes taken by the authors toward persons or events. But the important thing is that the play was not primarily concerned with persuading the audience into a position which would have made the drama understandable. It took for granted the fact that this audience was already prepared to understand. The moral ideas of Messrs. Stallings and Anderson were almost as nearly those of the man in the street as the ideas of Shakespeare had ever been. But of course the ideas of the American man in the street *circa* 1924 differed from those of the Elizabethan by, among other things, just the results of that revolution in which Ibsen and Shaw had played so large a part. And in any event the dramatic author was no longer at war with his audience.

In other words, the purpose of the play was to discover how the experience of two uncultivated but emancipated individuals who found themselves committed to a conflict which they were unable to idealize could be arranged into a satisfactory pattern. In another age their experiences would have taken shape around the ideas of patriotism, heroism, and honor. Their exaltations and their sufferings would have acquired a meaning by reference to these fixed points. But for these particular heroes these particu-

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lar fixed points no longer existed. They could no more reconcile themselves to their adventures by conceiving themselves as heroic defenders of a mystic fatherland than they could dignify their interlude with the farmer's buxom daughter by attributing to it the traditional values of romantic love. When life becomes as painful and as precarious as theirs was, then the human need to make life justify itself becomes desperately acute, and in their case the justification had to be made in terms of that witty animality which alone had been left them.

The play was immediately and enormously popular because in its essence it was closely relevant to the needs of its audience. Some part of that audience had recently emerged from literally similar adventures. Most of the rest of it had been participating in them vicariously at least. But emotionally the war had not been assimilated. Desperate efforts had been made to achieve that assimilation by interpreting it in terms of conventional patriotism and conventional conceptions of martial glory. But so far at least as the more intellectual section of the public was concerned, those efforts had been unsuccessful. Its emotional response to events had been too full of conflicts to achieve clear form. But by choosing as the heroes of their melodramas two scamps who had unconsciously but completely repudiated any effort to attribute conventional dignity to their roles, the authors were able to illustrate a perfectly consistent attitude toward events and a perfectly consistent emotional response to them. What is more, this emotional response, or rather this set of emotional responses, could be made to yield a certain desperate exultation not wholly unjoyous, and the result was to achieve for the audience a clarification and a release. A channel had been provided for the discharge of confused emotions. Here was a pattern into which, without recourse to dead ideas, hitherto confused reactions could be arranged, a channel through which pent-up emotions could flow.

Thus in such a play as this the drama had again established that relationship with ideas characteristic of "classic" as opposed to "revolutionary" drama. It was, in other words, not concerned so much with changing ideas as with exploring the emotional possibilities of life in a culture based upon the acceptance of certain moral and intellectual convictions. And to many, among whom I include myself, it seems that the means which literature has at its disposal make it peculiarly fitted for that task rather than for any other. It begins where abstract thinkers leave off, not in the sense that it is concerned either with advocating or revolutionizing their ideas, but in the sense that it reveals the significance of these in relation to the more complex and intangible, as well as more intimate, experiences of living. Shakespeare, as Shaw charges, did not undertake to modify very importantly the ideas of the Elizabethan man in the street. What he did do was to illustrate what life could be made to yield when judged and interpreted in terms of these ideas. And what can be said of Shakespeare can be said also of Racine or Molière or almost any other of the great dramatists, whose business has usually been primarily with what eludes the direct statement of the philospher, the moralist, or the statesman.

The American dramatists of the decade just past seem to me to have veered more and more in this direction. Many, like Sidney Howard and Elmer Rice, tended to take as their point of departure some "problem" which seemed to invite treatment in the form of the thesis play, but in their best work they usually developed it in such a way as to emphasize the purely dramatic rather than the didactic values. Mr. Howard's "They Knew What They Wanted" and Mr. Rice's "Street Scene" are notable examples. In the first you have the "case of the unmarried mother," but instead of arguing it out Mr. Howard takes the "liberal point of view" for granted and builds his play around the successful effort of the "deceived husband" to achieve a satisfactory emotional adjustment to the situation on the basis of a moral attitude emancipated from traditional attitudes. "Street Scene" illustrates even more strikingly the same tendency. Here you have a play about slum life written by a man whose "social conscience" is acute. During the last year or two he has written plays with definite political implications and even manifestos in defense of the socio-political theater. But it is interesting to note that "Street Scene" is essentially a tragedy rather than an argument. It is plain, of course, that the form assumed by the dilemmas in which the chief characters find themselves is largely determined by their unfavorable economic status. But the interest of the play centers not upon the exposition of that fact but on the working out of their emotional problems in purely human terms. "Street Scene" is a proletarian play in the sense that it deals with members of the proletariat; it is not a proletarian play in the more special sense of centering the attention on the class struggle. It concerns itself with such universal human themes as love and jealousy and aspiration as these happen to manifest themselves in the lives of the underprivileged.

The comedies of S. N. Behrman might also be taken as illustrations of the tendency of American dramatic literature to approximate, during the last decade, the classical form of the drama. But comedy is always the most conservative of the dramatic forms, because the comic pattern —the resolution of emotional and other difficulties in terms of common sense—seems more than any other pattern to depend upon a substratum of ideas which undergo only the most superficial modification from century to century. On the other hand, the case of Mr. O'Neill is perhaps the most striking of all. Like all dramatic writers who began about the time he did, he was sufficiently influenced by his immediate predecessors to tend almost inevitably to try to state his themes in terms of the "social problem." One or two of his earlier works—"Welded" and "All God's Chillun"—are very near to the "problem play" in its most literal, didactic form. But the style was not really congenial to him and what he most wanted to say could not be said in such terms. Perhaps the process of his emancipation from them is clearest in "The Hairy Ape," where what seems to begin as a direct sociological protest against the exploitation of the laborer turns into a tragedy whose dominant mood is mystical. Later, of course, Mr. O'Neill became fully conscious of the fact that his enterprise was not sociological. His plays approached nearer and nearer to the spirit of classical tragedy, and he proclaimed his intention to deal less with the relation of man to man than with that of man to God.

For that very reason, however, it might be maintained that to cite Mr. O'Neill is to beg the question, for the simple reason that his preoccupations have for some years

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been atypical. Perhaps, therefore, the case I am attempting to make had best rest chiefly upon such examples as Messrs. Anderson, Stallings, Howard, and Rice. All of them were obviously trained in the school of "advanced thinking" conducted by Ibsen and Shaw. And all, not consciously but merely through the effort to compose plays interesting to their contemporaries, found themselves writing in the manner of those non-revolutionary dramatists who accept as the basis of their writing the standards of their audience.

[*In the fourth article of his series, to appear next week, Mr. Krutch will discuss the "Marxian" drama of the present.*]

Our Mexican Colony

By MAXWELL S. STEWART

Mexico City, August 15

THE spectacle of 2,000 American business men, delegates to the Lions' "international" convention, occupying the best seats at the revival of the 500-year-old Aztec ceremony of the New Sun symbolizes present-day Mexican-American relations more aptly than would generally be admitted. It is true that the revolution has brought Mexico a certain degree of political independence from the United States. No longer, as under Porfirio Díaz, is the gringo lord of all he surveys. With important limitations he is subject to the same regulations as his Mexican competitors, and these regulations tend to be enforced. Nor is there likely to be a renewal of direct interference in Mexican affairs such as occurred during the Taft and Wilson administrations. The silk-glove diplomacy of Morrow has shown that results may be achieved without violating the canons of good taste.

Nevertheless, in essentials Mexico is scarcely more independent than Arkansas or Cuba. Its semi-socialistic government is hampered on every side by American overlordship in the economic sphere; and what is more serious, a large share of the human energies and physical resources of the country are required to pay the tribute exacted by its powerful northern neighbor. Twenty years ago it was estimated that America's stake in Mexico was over a billion dollars, or half the total wealth of the country. Today, though more than two-thirds of this amount is in default, the principal industries remain almost entirely under American control. In oil, for example, Mexican ownership is non-existent, the field being divided between the Standard Oil interest and the British-owned Royal Dutch Shell.

In mining, Mexico's most lucrative enterprise, statistics on the nationality of ownership are difficult to obtain. All companies are required to be incorporated in Mexico, and are subject to drastic limitations as to the number of foreigners which they may employ. In order to avoid undue difficulties many executives have taken out Mexican citizenship. Yet experience has shown that when an establishment runs afoul the law, it almost invariably bobs up as a subsidiary of an American holding company. According to the most reliable estimates available, from 90 to 95 per cent of Mexico's mineral production is from foreign-owned, chiefly American, mines. Since minerals and petroleum products constitute approximately two-thirds of Mexico's export trade, the strategic importance of American dominance of these industries can be readily pictured. The United States also has some $200,000,000 invested in agriculture, $60,000,000 in manufacturing, and several tens of millions in utilities.

While the Mexican people as a whole have derived certain incidental benefits from foreign capital investment, the cost has greatly outweighed the advantages. Certainly foreign exploitation of its mineral resources has been of slight value to Mexico. The construction of railways and bridges and the installation of utility equipment might seem, at first at least, to belong in a different category. But even here the price paid has been out of all proportion to the services rendered. In order to facilitate railway building the Díaz government paid large subsidies to contracting companies. Later, when inefficiency, watered stock, and badly planned lines kept the American companies from showing a profit, the government took over the railways, after guaranteeing to reimburse the investors in full.

A striking illustration of the demoralizing effect of foreign capital on Mexican political integrity is to be found in the state of Tabasco, where the dictatorial exploits of Garrido y Canabal have recently gained great notoriety as a result of the nation-wide student agitation against him. Garrido had an agreement with the Standard Fruit Company, an American concern, granting that corporation a virtual monopoly of the Tabascan banana trade in exchange for an unknown consideration. His tactics were very similar to those employed by gangsters the world over. Having complete control of the rivers and canals which constitute Tabasco's sole means of transportation, he simply denied their use to independent growers, thus forcing them to sell to the Standard Fruit at a price far below that which could be obtained on the open market. This same Garrido, incidentally, posed as a radical reformer, boasting that neither a church nor a saloon was open in the entire province of Tabasco.

The full extent of the bill Mexico is compelled to foot each year for the privilege of having foreigners "develop" its resources is difficult to estimate. Perhaps the best criterion is to be found in the large annual surplus of exports over imports—popularly but erroneously known as a favorable balance of trade. Prior to the depression Mexico exported annually approximately twice as much as it imported, sending abroad nearly 300,000,000 pesos more in goods than it received in return. The bulk of this consisted of petroleum, silver, gold, and other metals shipped to the United States. No estimate has been made of the so-called invisible items in the trade balance, but in view of the substantial American tourist trade and the number of Mexicans working in the United States it is evident that in services as well as in trade the United States is on the receiving side of the ledger. Since 1929 Mexican trade, like that of the entire world, has declined rapidly, but its export

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surplus is still in excess of 100,000,000 pesos. The unexpectedly high return obtained from the recently imposed tax on foreign remittances indicates the annual toll of absentee ownership, both Mexican and foreign, to be at least this large.

Further confirmation of the high cost of foreign exploitation may be found in the decline of working-class living standards. Because of the depreciation of the peso, prices have risen steadily in the past few years, while wages have remained virtually stationary. A recent study of 300 typical working-class families in Mexico City showed the median wage for the chief bread-winner to be less than 15 pesos (approximately $4) a week. For unskilled workers and women wages are materially less, and on the haciendas they are as low as 2 to 3 pesos a week. For the country as a whole the average wage is approximately 10 pesos a week ($3), while in the food industry it is only 5 pesos ($1.50). Although the cost of living is considerably below that of the United States, it is significant that urban workers spend from 50 to 60 per cent of their incomes for a very inadequate amount of food, while practically all of the even more meager income of the peons goes for bare necessities. The average weekly expenditure for cultural and recreational purposes—including newspapers, magazines, cinemas, and so on—for urban families receiving less than $4 a week is approximately 2 cents. All other expenditures, apart from food, shelter, and clothing, average about 8 cents per person a week. On the basis of these figures one is prepared to accept the widely quoted estimate that the standard of living of the working class has fallen 20 per cent in the past ten years.

In contrast to that of the city worker the lot of the peon has been improved somewhat in recent years through the gradual breaking up of the hacienda system. But the redistribution of land has been distressingly slow. In 1910, the last year of the Díaz regime, 3 per cent of the population owned all the land in the country. Today, twenty years after the proclamation of the famous land law of 1915, the same 3 per cent of the population owns 80 per cent of the land. The amount distributed to the peons has in most cases proved insufficient to maintain life unless they could find other means of employment.

If sheer misery, frustration, and discontent could make a revolution, Mexico would have staged a successful upheaval years ago. Its history is dotted with abortive peasant uprisings, some of major dimensions. There is no country in the world, except possibly Soviet Russia, where revolution is so widely and eagerly discussed; nor is there a nation where the physical obstacles to a successful uprising seem to be greater. With the commanding heights of economic power in the hands of foreign business interests and the local strongholds held by equally self-seeking *caciques,* a frontal attack would appear to be suicidal. But the Mexican revolution is not dead. Though the official "revolution" of Madero, Calles, and Cárdenas has brought no fundamental shift in economic power, it has aroused hidden aspirations in the hearts of millions of unprivileged persons. Betrayal from above and interference from without have not dampened this desire for fundamental change. But unfortunately all hope for a genuine Mexican New Deal is sheer utopianism as long as the United States holds all the cards.

Hoosier Hitlerism

By NORMAN THOMAS

"NO state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Under this familiar section of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States the strong arm of the federal government has been effectively extended time and again for the protection of property. Seldom has it been used to protect life and liberty. On September 3, 1935, an application for an injunction against the Governor of Indiana was filed under the authority of the Fourteenth Amendment in the federal court of Indianapolis. The hearing on it will be held September 20. It will make history. There is, I believe, at least one precedent for a federal injunction under the Fourteenth Amendment to protect property rights against state officials. There is none to protect liberty. In Indiana in two counties, Sullivan and Vigo, liberty is effectively and ruthlessly denied to citizens of the United States under military law.

This Indiana version of military law is a new instrument for the economical and effective denial of civil liberties. In its present form it seems to be the invention of that handsome Hoosier Hitler, Governor Paul McNutt, one-time national commander of the American Legion and professor of law in the University of Indiana. If it is not broken down in Indiana, it will spread to other states. The belated attention of the country was called to the situation in Indiana by the course of events in Terre Haute during the last six weeks. But in its beginning this splendid example of local fascism goes back to 1932, when Governor McNutt's Republican predecessor put Sullivan County, a coal-mining area, under martial law. Powers Hapgood, who was himself the Socialist candidate for Governor of Indiana in 1932, tells me that McNutt, the Democratic candidate and a supporter of Roosevelt, in his campaign backed up the Socialist denunciation of martial law. Nevertheless, in office McNutt has not only maintained military law in Sullivan County but clamped it down in Vigo County, of which Terre Haute is the county seat. The new and interesting thing about McNutt's military law is that he enforces it without the expense of maintaining any large number of troops. He has the usual civil authorities do the work but keeps them, contrary to the plain intent of the constitution of Indiana, subordinate to the military authorities. The result, and probably the intent, of the establishment of military law is to enable the authorities to help their friends of

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the Chamber of Commerce and the Manufacturers' Association to circumvent the rather liberal civil laws of Indiana, which give to labor the right of peaceful picketing and curb the use of the injunction against labor. The military dictator of Vigo County is a certain Major Earl Weimar, who with admirable candor told Powers Hapgood that while we did not have national fascism, there was a fascist dictatorship in Sullivan and Vigo counties.

To understand the situation one must know something about recent events in Terre Haute, hitherto famous as the home of Gene Debs. As long ago as last March the workers of the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company went out on strike for much-needed improvement in wages and working conditions and for a union shop. Somewhat later the employees of a malleable iron works also went on strike. These strikes were in general peaceful affairs. The only disturbance at the Columbian works was promptly repudiated by the strike committee. Toward the end of July the Columbian company brought in almost sixty private guards of the usual low order. They were marched to the works under the protection of the city and county authorities. (The mayor of the city is a Republican; the sheriff, who, like Governor McNutt himself, was elected with labor support, is a Democrat, and there is a beautiful united front.) The organized workers of Terre Haute demanded the removal of these thugs and gunmen in the employ of the bosses. When the request was refused, labor resorted to a general strike, which for the first twenty-four hours was probably the most complete tie-up the country has seen. There was no violence. The Governor, however, immediately declared martial law and rushed in troops. At the end of the second day the general strike was declared off. But the workers of the two factories still continued their strike. The Governor continued military law but rapidly reduced the number of troops to a few officers and a handful of soldiers headed by Major Weimar. The city and county have been perfectly quiet. From the moment of the arrival of the troops until now, picketing has been forbidden, Major Weimar has assumed authority to decide what meetings can be held, and scores of citizens have been placed under military arrest. One of these, Professor Shannon of the State Teachers College at Terre Haute, a man of high standing in the community, was held incomunicado for thirty-six hours simply because he asked an innocent question of a militiaman. During this time he was not only fingerprinted but photographed like a convict with a number hung around his neck. Workers were kept in the county jail without any charge against them and without trial for weeks. At one time residents in the factory area were arbitrarily ordered off the streets and off their own front porches.

To protest against these conditions and to call attention to them the Socialist Party sent in one of its national organizers, a young man from Wisconsin named Leo Vernon. He tried to hold a meeting at the recognized meeting place, the steps of the courthouse. He was arrested by the civil authorities—by a deputy sheriff, I believe—but at the jail he was promptly told he was held subject to orders from Major Weimar. That worthy demanded from him a promise to leave town and refused to let him communicate with a lawyer, his wife, or his friends. Hearing this, Powers Hapgood came from Indianapolis to Terre Haute to see Vernon and to try to bring about his release. Instead, Hapgood himself was imprisoned because of what he said in the jail concerning military law and because he would not promise to refrain from speaking or from sending in other Socialist speakers. The publicity that followed Hapgood's arrest got under Major Weimar's skin far enough to make him release first Vernon and later Hapgood without exacting any promises from them as to future conduct. He told them both that they would be arrested if they tried to speak and went so far as to warn Vernon that he would be arrested if he spoke to more than two persons on the street at any one time.

By this time the Socialist and Labor Defense Committee, recently organized by the Socialist Party, got into action. It sent a very able labor lawyer, Joseph Jacobs of Chicago, to Terre Haute. Mr. Jacobs also had credentials from the Chicago Federation of Labor, to which the Terre Haute Central Labor Union had appealed for help. It was arranged that I should make a test case by holding a widely advertised meeting on the courthouse steps. After Vernon and Hapgood were released they were added to the list of speakers. If we were arrested, an immediate application was to be made to a federal court for a writ of habeas corpus, a form of relief which the state court in a previous case had denied under open threat from the attorney for the Governor that the court could not enforce its order against the military. Thanks to widespread publicity, and probably to the Governor's political ambitions, at the last moment the military machine on his instruction decided to permit a meeting which they could not have stopped without dispersing it by force and arresting the speakers. By way of explanation Major Weimar, who had been jailing labor men wholesale, explained that he had no wish to interfere with a labor meeting, although he expressed surprise that labor should appeal to Socialists for help. Actually there had been no appeal for help, but cooperation in a common cause. Max Schafer, vice-president of the Central Labor Union, was the excellent chairman of the meeting on the courthouse steps, and T. N. Taylor, president of the same body, presided at the crowded meeting held at the Labor Temple that same night, at which a defense committee was set up. Both meetings were in complete, open, and vigorously expressed defiance of military rule. That they were held at all without interference meant logically a surrender by the Governor. Nevertheless, he has not withdrawn military law either in Vigo or in Sullivan County and the officious major has threatened to bring in troops again if picketing should be resumed. I think and hope that before this article sees the light of day the unions involved will decide that it is well to test this threat. Meanwhile, as I have already said, Mr. Jacobs, on behalf of a great many victims of martial law, has filed his application for an injunction against the Governor. He is ably assisted by a courageous Terre Haute attorney, Harlan Woodsmall. While it is pending, strike-breakers still go to work in Terre Haute with passes countersigned by the military authority. In other words, the Governor of Indiana is strike-breaker extraordinary; the companies find him more effective and cheaper than the notorious private detective agencies.

The story carries its own moral. One or two legal points are important. The Indiana constitution expressly subordinates military to civil law. The Governor in his

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proclamation did the exact opposite. Even the Governor has not dared to bring about the trial of civilians by military courts. Against this the laws and precedents, federal and state alike, are overwhelming. What has happened is that the military have held men indefinitely, at their own pleasure, without charge and without benefit of habeas corpus. The whole justification of martial law is the existence of a situation in which the civil police cannot function effectively. When martial law prevails in counties where no troops are needed to enforce it, its ostensible justification has obviously disappeared. But if the forerunners of fascism in America find that Governor McNutt can get away with this sort of thing its use will spread like wildfire. Hitler never thought of anything better. Acquiescence in it is acquiescence in tyranny. Newspapers which print editorials against Hitler and Mussolini and boast of American immunity to fascism, while ignoring or condoning Hoosier Hitlerism, are the worst sort of hypocrites. There is no single case in which the sincerity of the opposition to American fascism is more directly under test than in the fight against McNutt's martial law.

Since this article was written peaceful picketing has been resumed without interference by the military; but in an obvious effort to discourage meetings the police arrested Hapgood, Vernon, and Gilmartin on the charge of vagrancy. They had been helping the pickets and organizing a Sullivan County meeting. They are out on bail. All this adds to the expense, to meet which the Socialist and Labor Defense Committee, 549 Randolph Street, Chicago, imperatively needs financial support.

Correspondence

What Can Anyone Do?

To the Editors of The Nation:

I am reading *The Nation* again with great interest after three months in Canton, where I was cut off from it. While in Canton I didn't have the opportunity to read it at the library, and it takes money to buy it; even if 60 cents a month seems little, still it's big when money is so hard to corner in adequate quantities. In this town I have access to this and other periodicals.

The industries of this country, except a very few like Procter and Gamble and Wrigley's Gum, are more and more the enemies of labor. Not news to you of course, nor to me, but I had a first-hand taste of it in Canton at Beigh works of Republic Steel. No organized labor there; as long as a worker can supply the horse-power needed to hold the job, O. K.—plus keeping his mouth shut about being exploited, or working conditions, or labor controversy. Well, I was new to the job, but learned it quick enough. The point is that you did two men's work. I'm single, young, and strong, so after three days I told 'em to go to hell with their job. Means nothing of course, just a shout down a well. What can anyone do to whip corporate management and employer enmity toward labor when there are hordes of men and particularly unemployed college men and other young saps ready to work in their damn mill without a thought except the few lousy dollars on pay day?

New Philadelphia, Ohio, August 12 E. H. F.

Jews Need No New Exile

To the Editors of The Nation:

It is with a pang that I have just read Russia Aids the Jews, by my honored friend Oswald Garrison Villard. If so high-minded and sincere a friend of the Jewish people is completely blind to the realities of the Jewish world crisis and its remedies, where shall we turn for any help, for any understanding?

The Jewish people is a *people,* an organism with a strong will to life and continuance. We want no more lost tribes, whether in Babylon or Biro-Bidjan. The Soviets will let us save our skins. They destroy our souls and our people-hood. The privilege of babbling dialectic materialism in Yiddish will not help us more than did the privilege of being Prussians of the Mosaic faith. All assimilatory experiments, whether voluntary or enforced, end in extirpation or disaster. The Jewish people wants to live.

Mr. Villard says: "If one realizes the limitations of Palestine. . . ." Our experts hold that Palestine and Transjordania can absorb and well sustain 9,000,000 Jews. If Mr. Villard desires, as I know he does, to befriend the Jewish people, let him raise his justly influential voice to persuade the British Colonial Office to renounce that niggardly immigration policy that has already produced a labor shortage in Palestine and, above all, to open at once the gates of Transjordania, a large, a fertile, and an unpeopled land to which our historic claim is as valid as that to the land west of the Jordan.

Jews will go to Biro-Bidjan because it is better to be alive than dead. Jews who go to Eretz Ysrael become new men, clear souls, creating values for themselves and all mankind. We need no new exile; we need to liquidate exile; we need to go home.

Burlington, Vt., August 24 Ludwig Lewisohn

Contributors to This Issue

Isidor Feinstein is an associate editor of the New York *Post.*

Bruce Crawford was formerly editor of *Crawford's Weekly* in Virginia.

Norman Thomas was the Socialist Party's candidate for President in 1932.

H. L. Mitchell is secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, and J. R. Butler is its president.

Albert Jackson is secretary of the Share-Croppers' Union.

Dorothy Dudley, an American writer living in France, is the author of "Forgotten Frontiers: Dreiser and the Land of the Free."

Alexander Crosby was chief editorial writer and news editor of the Staten Island *Advance* until he was dismissed for joining the Newspaper Guild.

Edgar Ansel Mowrer was formerly head of the Chicago *Daily News* bureau in Berlin. He was forced to leave Germany after the publication of his book, "Germany Puts the Clock Back."

Ludwig Lore, formerly editor of the New York *Volkszeitung,* now conducts a column, "Behind the Cables," in the New York *Post.*

Philip Blair Rice contributes reviews and critical articles to various periodicals.

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Labor and Industry

To Russia and to Roy

By HEYWOOD BROUN

MANY a liberal has said: "Of course, Franklin Roosevelt is not really bent on any fundamental readjustment. The most he seems to be seeking is a patchwork job and a pretty sleazy one at that. But what can I do? Next year I'm going to be faced with the problem of voting for him or somebody much worse, like Herbert Hoover. I don't want to throw away my vote."

But these are the very persons who have been easy marks for the President's political tactics. They are the suckers whose lack of vision wins Franklin Delano Roosevelt the doubtful compliment of being called "the most astute of all American politicians." I even doubt whether politics belongs among the arts. Certainly the strategy of Mr. Roosevelt is transparently simple and should fool no one. And this is set down in all humility by one who has been fooled several times.

Of course hindsight is easiest. Right now the tactics seem absurdly simple. Radical groups can offer little strength in any national election without recruiting people from the liberal fringes. I do not mean that this is true for all eternity but it has been our national experience up till now. Accordingly, during the last session of Congress Franklin Roosevelt supported a tax bill which, although less than drastic, did have in it a gesture toward discouraging great fortunes. When finally whittled down, not very much of the original pale pinkishness remained. But it had done the trick. The conservatives fell into the trap. The President was a "red," a Communist, a disciple of share-the-wealth.

The fury of the attack from the right was so great that mild radicals and convinced liberals were impelled to drop all third-party talk and rally around the President. Even though charges of radicalism were preposterous, he had been built into a symbol of change. If he were to be destroyed, worse reactionaries would be in power and fascism itself would be no fantastic threat.

Successful third parties are not formed overnight. Particularly in the beginning they move slowly. To be realistic about it, the formation of an effective third party along national lines for 1936 is even now extremely difficult on account of the shortness of the time. Having scotched, or at any rate held up, large-scale attack from the left, the President immediately began to move right as rapidly as possible. William Randolph Hearst was slamming him day after day as a Communist. What was the easy answer to this attack? The Russian note, of course. How could you effectively call a man a Communist if he had just sent a sharp and wholly unprovoked letter of protest to the Soviets?

This was a sop to other big business interests as well as to Hearst. By a rather fantastic coincidence the suggestion of a break with Moscow also meant a certain number of labor votes. William Green was committed to the same policy as Hearst. Moreover, labor had been held in line by the very vague promises of the Wagner bill. The President could now afford, politically, to make a real and heavy concession to capital.

The idea of the exchange of letters probably originated with Roy Howard, but the particular form of the announcement suited the purposes of the President admirably. If it were possible to get Hearst back on the reservation, Mr. Roosevelt would do so. But though the President has carefully refrained from ever answering back to San Simeon and though he did come to the rescue of the publisher in the Jennings case, he undoubtedly felt that a gesture of surrender to Hearst now would be too abject and might not do the trick. It was easier to save face by dealing with Roy Howard. The Scripps-Howard chain is on record as being in support of the Administration. To be sure, this support has recently worn very thin. There was, it should be admitted, vigorous backing for the "death-sentence" fight but sharp criticism of the tax program. Indeed, this dissent was so definite that it seemed entirely within the bounds of possibility that the chain of papers was about to jump to the other league.

The Scripps-Howard papers have a large influence in the Middle West, particularly in Ohio, which will be one of the vital states in 1936. And so Roy Howard was permitted to be the agent who brought about the announcement of "a breathing spell" for business. Some of the President's friends still maintain that he is only going to rest a little while and then start all over again with a liberal program. If so, it is certain that he will withhold it until after the election of 1936. The football quarterback has decided that as the half is drawing to a close it will be good policy to stall and to "freeze the ball." Simple line plays will be called, not to gain ground but just to use up time. Big business is to have a breathing spell and labor is to go on choking as usual.

The announcement as interpreted in Wall Street and elsewhere means that the President is encouraging finance capital to go out and make itself some money. Working conditions, wages, and hours are to be forgotten. It is one of the most striking episodes in American history in proof of the need of an independent labor party. If such an organization were in existence or even in the offing, no President would have the audacity to decree a breathing spell at a time when unemployment is at or close to its all-time peak. Why wouldn't stocks go up? A laissez faire policy is announced at a moment when the country is filled with huge supplies of cheap labor.

If anybody thinks that working conditions were bad in the early days of 1935, just let him wait and see what "adequate" is going to mean in the winter of 1936. Of course it may be argued that big business has learned its lesson and that it will curb its rapacity just a little. There is not the slightest evidence that big business ever learns. What reason is there to expect that it will now when the President has said in almost so many words, "Go on in there, gentlemen, and have your fun. All game laws are off"?

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The Cropper Learns His Fate

By H. L. MITCHELL and J. R. BUTLER

THE Southern Tenant Farmers' Union celebrated its first birthday on July 23, 1935. Its members and officials look back upon a year of struggle against great odds, of painful education in the ways of courts and governments, and of deepening insight into the full bitterness of that ruthless economic system by which cotton is produced. The human consequences of an economy of scarcity have become more clear. The complete failure of the "New Deal" to benefit the men and women who do the work in the fields has been disclosed. The essential dishonesty of the labor sections of the cotton acreage-reduction contract has become manifest, as Washington has refused to combat abuses or construct any effective agency for enforcement.

The union was born out of the suffering of the multitude of tenants—how many thousands we do not know—who were evicted from their lands in consequence of the 40 per cent acreage reduction in 1934, or who found themselves degraded from share-cropper status to the even more precarious condition of casual day laborers. Its first objective was to oppose an extension of these trends, and to secure administrative and legal enforcement of the labor sections of the contract. Trusting much in the reputation of Secretary Wallace and in the protestations of good-will made by some of his staff, the union and its friends made a very earnest effort to secure administrative protection for its members. Detailed reports of specific cases of contract violation were sent to various offices in the Department of Agriculture, and we and other officials of the union laid our cause before the Secretary and his staff in personal visits to the capital. Our reception there varied from a courteous and sympathetic hearing in the Secretary's office to the ugly temper in which Mr. Cully Cobb, head of the cotton section of the AAA, proceeded to accuse us of being "reds," in lieu of listening to our case.

Courtesy and sympathy notwithstanding, the net result of all these efforts has been complete frustration and disillusionment. Our faith in the higher administration of the department survived several earlier "investigations" by Mr. Miller and later by Mr. Davis, who made perfunctory examination of our complaints and applied a thick layer of whitewash in nearly every case. The lack of any vigorous and continuing enforcement policy or machinery prevented any real progress. Even if enforced, the contract itself was grossly inequitable, granting to the landlord four cents per pound for cotton not grown in 1934 and 1935, while the cropper received a sop of one-half cent, which the landlord frequently refused to turn over to him.

Our continuing protests against the threatened eviction of some five hundred of our families, mostly because of their union membership, combined with our court action seeking an injunction against the eviction of twenty-three families by Mr. Hiram Norcross, planter of Tyronza, finally led the Department of Agriculture to make the only really thorough study of the situation which has ever been made. The union contended that, in addition to other abuses, our people were being evicted in violation of Section 7 of the cotton contract, which promised that the landlord "shall permit all tenants to continue in the occupancy of their houses on this farm, rent free, for the years 1934 and 1935." Our lawyers held a letter from Mr. Oscar Johnston, author of this section, in which he definitely confirmed his previous oral assurances that he had meant to insure the tenure of "all tenants *on the farm*" (italics ours). An influential section of the Department of Agriculture was inclined to accept this interpretation, which conflicted with a ruling made by the cotton section, and at one time we were led to believe that official instructions in this sense were shortly to be given.

As evictions of our people began, the department dispatched Mrs. Mary Conner Myers, of the AAA legal staff, to study the situation. In a three weeks' investigation she made a detailed survey of nine large plantations in eastern Arkansas and found widespread abuses and violations of contract in every case, exceeding any charges we had made. She returned to Washington laden with hundreds of affidavits and other records. She also carried back hundreds of letters which had come flooding into Memphis from all directions—appeals for aid from dispossessed or defrauded tenants and croppers.

Administrative action came swiftly, but of an unexpected character. Forty-eight hours after the Myers report was put into the hands of Mr. Jerome Frank, chief of the AAA legal staff, he and others of his department were unceremoniously discharged. Other factors than a dispute over Section 7 of the cotton contract were involved, but the tension created within the department by conflicting interpretations of this article was undoubtedly a major factor in precipitating this spectacular "purge." The groups opposing any attempt to protect the Southern agricultural laborer were able to force the Secretary, much against his will and conscience, we may believe, to acquiesce in the final suppression of the Myers report. No action was ever taken against any of the plantations. The report circulated from one unwilling office to another, was read in embarrassment and passed along. We have been assured by one official of the department that its findings will be taken into account in formulating future administrative rulings. Cold comfort indeed for the victims of the cotton program!

Shortly after Secretary Wallace had capitulated to the Southern planter group he issued a ruling that the disputed phraseology of Section 7 meant only that the same number of tenants must be employed, and that the contract gave no guaranty of tenure to any particular family. In the face of this ruling our legal action was dismissed by the Supreme Court of Arkansas. Our attempts to get a Congressional investigation fell to the ground as one friendly Member of Congress after another felt the same pressure which operated upon the Secretary. The cropper was left to his fate.

With the realization by all concerned that the Department of Agriculture had no intention of even trying to enforce the labor sections of the contract, cruel terror closed down on the Arkansas countryside. By night houses of

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union leaders were shot up (130 bullet holes were counted in one of them); the home of the union attorney, Mr. C. T. Carpenter of Marked Tree, was surrounded and shot at by a crowd of some forty men; union members and sympathizers were attacked and beaten, a number being wounded and several killed by vigilante bands organized by several of the larger plantation owners. The pattern of violence which is now becoming almost stereotyped in our "free" America was woven anew in the cotton fields. All appeals for protection of civil liberties sent to Washington and Little Rock have gone unanswered. Our people were evicted by the hundreds and many of them were thrown helpless upon the mercy of the FERA.

Still the union stands—and grows. Our headquarters were moved to Memphis, where civil liberty still has its defenders. Partly underground, partly in the light of day, the organization work proceeds. Neither by benefit of Washington nor by action through the courts can we hope to protect ourselves, or win security from bitter exploitation. We now see the cruel mockery of the protestations of democracy which the Department of Agriculture made in setting up its county control committees. At least in the cotton country no tenant or cropper ever sits upon these boards. We have no rights which anyone need respect. Under the existing system no contract will be written which will give us our just share of the government benefits or will protect us in our tenure of our land. No contractual pledge can or will be enforced.

But we are discovering that in a stern and bitter world we have, and can have, the fellowship and support of our neighbors. For the first time in the lives of most of us we are coming together—we have, so far, 125 locals—to discuss our common problems. We are struggling toward articulation of our needs and hopes. We have bridged the abyss of misunderstanding which has previously divided the races.

Some of our people are still confused and can be led astray. Only recently the planters sought to disrupt the union by sending hirelings into our ranks, who persuaded a former president to turn against his comrades. Under their dictation this man left union headquarters with his family, only to return shortly with a writ of replevin by which he removed much of the union property. In the court hearing there appeared, as advocates for the planter gang, none other than those old enemies of the union, Mr. Fred Stafford, deputy prosecuting attorney of Poinsett County, and the Reverend J. Abner Sage, labor-baiting Methodist parson of Marked Tree, who has sullied his priestly office by assuming the role of supreme tactician for the vigilante bands. The union property was duly awarded to the plotters by a justice who is himself a large landholder. But the enemies of the union overplayed their hand. Our former president, realizing at last the character of his support, came secretly to us, admitted his error, and gave an affidavit by whose aid the union was able to recover its property by winning a plea of abatement. The attack from within collapsed.

But now the offensive against us develops new forms. In recent weeks there has appeared a new organization, ostensibly of working farmers, whose members wear green shirts, have a military discipline, and flaunt as their sacred emblem—the swastika. Hitler over the plantations!

We are now asking for more adequate wages in cotton picking. Refusing any longer to accept wages of 35 cents to 65 cents a hundred pounds, our membership has just voted, 11,186 to 450, to strike for $1 a hundred. Only day laborers will strike, since the problems of the share-cropper must be met in other ways. As this strike starts, terror will again close down on our countryside. We are resolved to adopt no methods of violence in retaliation, but by peaceful and passive resistance win that fairer share of the products of our labor which we have been so long denied.

On the Alabama Front

By ALBERT JACKSON

APPROXIMATELY 3,000 cotton pickers and wage hands are already on strike in the cotton fields in central Alabama, and the strike is spreading rapidly into other counties in which the Share-Croppers' Union is organized. This strike differs from a factory strike in that the cotton opens at different times in different places and the pickers must wait until they are called to work before they announce that they are striking.

The strike began on J. R. Bell's plantation in Lowndes County on August 19. Bell had said he would "let the cows eat it" before he would pay $1 a hundred pounds to have his cotton picked. He said he might pay wage hands $1 a day, but he immediately started planning new "rent" charges in order to retrieve the bulk of the wage increase. Bell decided on the morning of August 19 that he wanted his cotton picked at 40 cents a hundred and that he would use any means to get it done. Sheriff R. E. Woodruff of Haynesville was called. In spite of a flourish of pistols and rifles by Woodruff and his deputies, coupled with soft talk about "poor Mr. Bell not being able to pay any more than 40 cents," the strikers stated flatly that they would not pick any cotton until they got their price. Willie Witcher, a local strike leader, said he didn't want to hear any of that talk and started back to his shack. A deputy heard the remark and called Woodruff, who ordered Witcher to stop. Because Witcher didn't "run" back, Woodruff shot at him five times, hitting him in the leg. They rushed to Witcher as he lay on the ground and Woodruff smashed him over the head with a pistol butt yelling, "I'll kill you, you black son of a bitch." Witcher replied, "You might kill me but you'll never scare me." Then he was carried to jail. The strike held solid.

At this point Sheriff R. E. Woodruff organized a gang of vigilantes which roved around nights breaking into strikers' homes and carrying them off about ten miles, beating them almost to death, and leaving them in the swamps. This terror failed to break the strike. Even the few scabs that had been mustered quit the fields.

On Thursday, August 22, the vigilantes raided Georgia Gray's place, beating her and her sisters. While the beating was going on, Jim Press Meriwether, a striker, walked by the door unarmed and was shot down. The gang then proceeded to Bennie Calloway's place, where they beat up Callie Calloway and Jim Meriwether's wife, tying a rope around Mrs. Meriwether's neck and hanging her from the rafters for awhile before releasing her. Then they went back to pick up Jim Meriwether, who was mortally wounded, carried him a few miles out on a hillside, and

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riddled his body with bullets. That same night the strikers armed themselves for self-protection. They met the vigilantes as they started to raid a striker's shack. When the gang saw the opposition was formidable, they ran, and since then the raids have not been so frequent.

The strike meanwhile has spread to several other plantations and at present covers all of Lowndes County and has started into Montgomery County. On Seller's plantation in lower Montgomery County the wage hands have won their demand for $1 a day for ten hours' work. The local newspapers are taking the word of the sheriffs and landlords as gospel and spreading lies about the strike that only an idiot could believe. It was said that Meriwether was arrested for "firing on a group of Negro workers," and that when they "reached a point where he had hidden a shotgun in a ditch, Meriwether jerked free and grabbed the shotgun and was mowed down."

Now the Montgomery *Advertiser* announces that "with federal, state, county, and city authorities cooperating in the hunt for the Communist organizers" the trouble should end soon. Charles Tasker and James Jackson were arrested in Montgomery and quizzed about the identity of the secretary of the Share-Croppers' Union, but were released when pressure was brought to bear on the authorities. They were then escorted to the county line and told to leave for good.

The lie is given to the "red scare" of the newspapers by the strikers themselves. The miserable conditions under which they work, the starvation wages of $3 a week and less, the denial of all civil and constitutional rights have united all the cotton pickers, wage hands, and rural relief workers in a determined struggle to win. The strike demand—for $1 a hundred pounds—is an indication of present conditions. In Talapoosa, Chambers, Lee, and Randolph counties, where the union is the strongest, the strike is just beginning. Terror still is rife, and organizers are risking their lives daily in the fight for decent wages and working conditions and for the elementary civil and constitutional rights to organize, strike, and picket.

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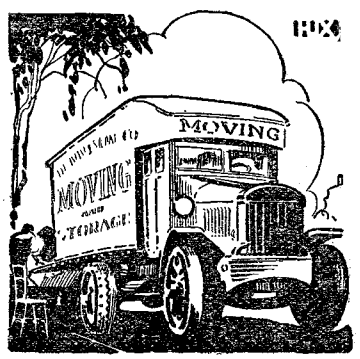

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Books

An Interview with Paul Valéry

By DOROTHY DUDLEY

"WHAT magazine is it for? Who will be the readers?" Paul Valéry asked in response to my request for an interview. I explained that *The Nation* was a review devoted to social issues, literature, and the arts, with a strong interest in politics.

"Yes," he said, "like everything today. For myself, I never occupy myself with politics. I *hate* parties!" He repeated the phrase in English to make it more emphatic. "A man worthy of the name cannot agree with another on more than one question, if on one. A party presupposes agreement on a number of questions. However, we need not speak of politics; we can speak of metapolitics. . . ."

In February, 1932, André Gide wrote in his journal of Paul Valéry:

> I went to see P. V. and stayed more than two hours conversing. . . . Those who have not known him cannot imagine the exquisite amenity of his expression, of his smile and voice, the abundant resources of his mind, the wit of his sallies, the clarity of his views . . . he was harrowed by the general situation, and convinced that the miserable work of the politicians was leading us to the abyss, and all of Europe with us. He read me a declaration of Einstein's, clearly individualist, to which he subscribes more willingly than to the Soviets. Impossible, he thinks, to assemble a single front with which to oppose the ruinous claims of the nationalists. . . . I went away very gloomy, for I have no doubt he is right. The catastrophe seems almost inevitable.

A melancholy illumines this entry in Gide's journal, as if the conversation were in a class of events occurring for one of the last times, if not the last, in an era so nearly closed—this communion between two untrammeled intricate minds. Their exchange of views is like a last leaf in the European garden, to which spring might bring only weeds. The gates are closed, the hinges rusty; nothing to do but to move with the movers, to exchange long-cherished privacies for roads and hotels, somewhat on the American plan.

It is known to what chain of hotels Gide has intrusted himself—the U. S. S. R. Whether or not he finds them uncomfortable, he recommends the management: "I have come to wish with all my heart the defeat of capitalism and of the abuses, injustices, lies, and monstrosities crouched in its shadow. And I am not persuaded that the Soviets must fatally and necessarily lead to the strangling of all we live for. An intelligent communism has need to favor individuals of value, and to turn to account all the values of the individual." He speaks again of Valéry: "'If communism should succeed,' P. V. said to me, 'that would take away my taste for living.' . . . On the contrary it would take away my taste for living if it fails."

Valéry, we have heard, out of his fastidious singleness of mind, took a different road. He sought formally to organize with other Europeans of the same caliber a kind of distinguished clubhouse, or sphere of influence, rather than give in to Gide's community center. In October, 1933, he became president of a congress organized by the Society of European Cooperation, which conducted a series of discourses on the future of the European mind. As a result many books have been translated and prefaced, many courses of lectures initiated, in an effort to ward off chaos.

The International Congress of Writers for the Defense of Culture, convening this June in Paris under Gide's inspiration, gave a record of his proposals and apparent hopes up to date. Valéry's measures of defense, however, have gained less publicity.

In August, 1935, therefore, on the brink of so many predicted changes and disasters, it seemed valuable to learn from him, if possible, the results of his efforts:

"We can speak of metapolitics," Valéry had said. "I like the prefix "meta"—metaphysics, metapolitics. In other words, I have considered especially the large events.

"As early as 1919 I wrote a study called 'La Crise de l'Esprit,' in which I showed that the great modern political phenomenon, one of the greatest, lay in the fact that for the first time in history free land had disappeared; that consequently the whole earth was occupied or possessed by organized nations, and by nations having equivalent techniques. As a result inequality of power would become less and less founded on inequality of technique. And, moreover, so-called civilized nations would be implacably devoted to teaching their method of industrial and military power to others—the most recent example was Japan. In this connection I considered that the victory of Japan over China, dating from 1890, constituted a major event in the history of the world. For it showed for the first time in the modern world the intervention of an Asiatic state outside of its domain, and in a field reserved up to then for the expansion of Western peoples.

"How had that been possible? It was because Japan had received European instruction. Another fact relative to Japan shows the influence of the Occident in Asia: in 1900 Japan had 40,000,000 inhabitants; in 1935 Japan has 72,000,000. The population has nearly doubled in thirty-five years, and that explains the powerful pressure she is exercising to go outside of her islands. This growth is due in great part to the Western method of hygiene introduced into Japan. As a result of this and many other things the modern political universe is prodigiously different from the one which history has made known to us in the past; and the internal relations of this universe are enormously more numerous and their immediate consequences infinitely more rapid than before. That is why it is impossible today to foresee events and to prepare decisions. The greatest brains could not arrive at them. For any of their projects, any of their plans, can be upset in a minute by a radio from the other side of the earth, or from no matter where.

"Very unhappily we find all the statesmen, all the economists, and naturally all the philosophers apparently engaged in a match of errors and false predictions on every possible question. It is completely impossible for it to be otherwise.

"Finally I would sum up my thought on these questions

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by saying that humanity, which has known how to transform the universe in so profound a fashion, has not known up to now how to make for itself a spirit, or customs, or laws in harmony with this great change. I don't know whether man is ever going to succeed in this. At times I am very pessimistic about it. And I ask myself the question—Is human intelligence about to diminish?

"In any event, the most delicate regions, the most refined areas of the intelligence are already very much threatened. We see superstitions appearing which we thought had disappeared. We see the greatest peoples renouncing liberty almost with enthusiasm—liberty whose conquest cost them so dear, and which only twenty years ago seemed to us an indisputable principle, acquired forever." A pause followed this statement of the ultimate zero.

"In what category," I asked, "do you place the individuals whose names represent these reactions—Hitler, for example? Do you think of him as a man with whom you could exchange ideas? Or as the head of a human tidal wave or landslide, inexplicable to himself—a force similar to the billionaires who made and unmade America?"

"He is not like the American magnates," was Valéry's answer. "He works with spiritual means. But for us French it is extremely difficult to understand how Hitler has been able to acquire his immense power over the German people. It seems to us a phenomenon of our epoch—certainly a kind of prodigy of will and eloquence. A prodigy that appears entirely impossible to us today, in a country like France. But you must not forget that the German sensibility and spirit are particularly obscure to the French. One of the strangest facts when one considers that it is a question of neighboring peoples, for centuries in relation with each other. . . .

"Certainly the value of Hitler, appraised according to our criterions and habits of mind, does not seem that of a chief to whom we would confide the destinies of a country. . . . Bonaparte accomplished an empire with us because he had given proofs of engineering skill and sense of government. But the Germans trusted Hitler without any proof, upheld only by his speeches. Possibly the German people as a whole recognized in him the man who expressed their most powerful desires in the most energetic and simple way. But the phenomenon seems to us specifically German."

"Then the German people," I said, "as symbolized by Hitler, are to you like a foreign body, so different as to be antagonists in the midst of Europe?"

"Yes, I think so."

"In that case, Europe is destined to war at the will of Germany?"

"Probably," he agreed. "Except that in the meantime Europe might have to come together in the face of Asia. . . ."

So, in contrast to the specific solutions and cures which I heard outlined by Gide and his colleagues at their International Congress a few weeks before, almost as if they were speaking as one man, this particular interview with Valéry was coming to a close on a lonely note, that of uncertainty and pessimism. I wanted to make sure I had not misunderstood: "Then today you have no program of the intelligence with which to oppose the spiritual bankruptcy of Europe? What of the Society of European Cooperation? You have been quoted as having hopes of that."

"Yes, I used to have ideas for a solution through individual effort, through culture. But not any more. For one thing intellectuals cannot work today. Their work is not wanted, and besides there is no leisure for it. Spare time is necessary to the mind. *Pour l'esprit il faut du temps perdu.* . . . It was an American, you know, who denied us that liberty—Benjamin Franklin with his 'Time is money.' I can't forgive him that. If only he had said 'Money is time,' everything might have been different. . . . Of course," he made it clear, "I am speaking only for Europe; America is not assailed with the same dangers. You are not menaced by the past as we are, by the dead—Germany with its gods of the forest, Italy with its memory of Rome, every country with its long-fought-for boundaries. Compared to us you are untrammeled. . . ."

I said I wasn't so sure; that sometimes the United States seemed like a vast cemetery where Europeans from the start had gone to bury their cultures, together with the Indian cultures they had destroyed. I wondered whether communism was not the one live ferment today; and that was working somewhere between Europe and Asia. That was what Gide, Malraux, Aragon, and all the others had said. What did he think of their optimism?

"They talked that way, yes . . . but I doubt if they are more hopeful than I. At least I am absolutely sure they know no more about it than I. . . . Furthermore, I believe that the skeptic, not the passive skeptic but the skeptic in action, accomplishes more than the optimist. I have always held that it is best to conduct one's thought with the least possible credence."

A Little Freedom, Please!

Freedom of the Press. By George Seldes. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.75.

SINCE the advent of Roosevelt the newspaper publishers have set an all-time record for hysterical talk about a free press. Abolish child labor? Regulate dishonest advertising? Permit editorial workers to unionize? Put a tax on newsprint? Inconceivable! All these propositions, say the penny-minded publishers, threaten the existence of our free press, which is the very bulwark of our liberties. Thus far the publishers, by needling the public with their own propaganda and by running one of the most powerful lobbies in Washington, have preserved their concept of a free press. Their industry, they say, differs from other businesses because it is sanctified by the Constitution. The marvel is that the publishers haven't taken holy orders and then asked for complete tax exemption.

Newspapermen have been sickened and angered by their employers' hypocrisy, and many readers have seen the swindle with the help of the liberal weeklies and a few rebellious newspapers, such as the Milwaukee *Journal,* the New York *Post,* and occasionally the New York *News* and *World-Telegram.* But more than irregular sniping is needed to answer the big guns and field pieces of nearly 2,000 publishers. The time was ripe for a book picturing the publishers as just another unit in the capitalist system, neither better nor much worse than the Associated Gas and Electric Company, treating the reader as a dumb bird who lives to be exploited.

Mr. Seldes has done exactly that. With the knowledge of a skilled journeyman, he has calmly and carefully drafted an amazing indictment of the American press—amazing not be-

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cause of sensational revelations, since much of the material is not new, but because of the bulk of the evidence. Most of us know that some newspapers have sold out to the utilities but we are hardly prepared for Mr. Seldes's reminder that "the public-utility corporations . . . never claimed they had corrupted more than four-fifths of the press." He makes that statement by way of complimenting the 20 per cent that kept their independence, at least on the utilities issue.

The author concludes, *"We have had a very few liberal, fearless newspapers, but we have never had a free press."* In explaining why, he fills some 300 pages with abundant documentation. He puts his finger on fascist trends; he shows the red scare in everyday use. Candid statements of men who work for or with newspapers make solid evidence. A Du Pont advertising director once remarked, "Time was when publishers were editors who endeavored to mold the opinion of readers along this line or that. . . . Nowadays the real publishers are the advertisers, since their financial support of a publication is in most cases all that keeps it alive." And the editor of the old New York *Tribune* confessed: "I am paid $150 per week for keeping my honest opinions out of the paper. . . . The business of the New York journalist is to destroy the truth, to lie outright, to pervert, to vilify, . . . and to sell his race and his country for his daily bread."

Advertising, however, must not be made the whipping boy, as it too often is. The fundamental barrier to a free press is that newspapers are capitalist enterprises, and the proprietors instinctively fight any change in the old order that might endanger their investment or income. Mr. Seldes drives home this point in his chapters on the New York *Times* and the Associated Press. His excellent account of the San Francisco publishers' strategy in breaking the general strike shows that the newspaper owners were twisting and falsifying the news, not to protect advertising revenue, but to wreck organized labor. The same underhanded work is being done all over the country; more examples might well have been included.

To a nameless New York *Times* man Mr. Seldes credits the description of a pernicious and often overlooked result of news suppression. The reporter learns quickly, this critic observes, that certain types of news won't be printed; then "his mind becomes numb, and he goes through years of work . . . seeing only what he should see, writing only what he should write."

How can we get a free press? Mr. Seldes reviews some of the possibilities: ad-less newspapers, endowed newspapers, labor newspapers. But it is to the Newspaper Guild, the two-year-old migraine of the publishers, that he turns for the best "practical solution." The Guild, he says, "seeks a greater share and responsibility in newspaper making today. The difference between the Guild and the publishers is this: the former displays a social conscience while the latter still live in the golden but dying age of the socially irresponsible profit motive." If the Guild fails to rescue the press, he warns, the last hope will be revision of the social order.

Mr. Seldes might as well have gone one step farther and summoned the revolutionaries forthwith, even though the call would have cost him the unqualified indorsement by William Allen White that appears on the book jacket. The Guild, now representing about one-fifth of the working newspapermen, will be fortunate if it raises editorial wages to the level of printers' pay. Not even the Guild's most buoyant leaders could expect Mr. Sulzberger to assemble the New York *Times* unit in his office and announce: "Boys, the editorial page has been lousy for years. From now on it's yours. Do with it what you will." In fact, many publishers look under the bed every night, nightshirts fluttering with the beat of their great hearts, expecting to see a Guild member pop out with the plea, "A little freedom, please."

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In a newspaper roll of honor Mr. Seldes puts the name of Marlen Pew, editor of *Editor and Publisher,* at the top of a list of six men who have been "a tremendous factor in bettering American journalism." Apparently Mr. Pew, bitter enemy of the Guild, was not consulted on the choice of his companions; for, although he would certainly approve the names of Oswald Garrison Villard, Ernest Gruening, William Allen White, and Silas Bent, his verdict on the sixth man—Heywood Broun—would no doubt be etaoin or shrdlu.

ALEXANDER CROSBY

The World of Horst Wessel

The Nazi Dictatorship: A Study in Social Pathology and the Politics of Fascism. By Frederick L. Schuman. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

THIS is the definitive work on Hitlerism, practically perfect of its kind. The origin, development, intentions, contradictions, personalities, comedy, horror, and probable future of German fascism are here dissected with the mastery of the political surgeon trained in the admirable school of the University of Chicago. The facts—so far as is known to the writer of this review—were and are scrupulously as stated. This is contemporary Germany as it appears to the unblinking foreign eye. Doubtless for this reason—though not for this reason alone—it will be rejected by Nazis both within and without Germany. For, as Professor Schuman writes in his preface, "like every form of highly emotionalized and subjectivized mass mysticism, National Socialism demands acceptance or rejection. Objectivity is equivalent to rejection." And this is an objective study. "An adequate science of politics must be a rationale of the non-rational."

The Germans failed to reach self-government before 1914. "Weimar presented liberty to a people historically conditioned to desire despotism." The German Republic, that is, left the Germans free to find their own philosophy, realize their own ideals, decide with what occupations they would fill the long hours between birth and death. It was for allowing this freedom that many, fearful of individual thought, emotion, or action, never forgave the republic. Personal liberty was the "national shame" Hitler could always successfully appeal away from. More than elsewhere, people in Germany were indignant at being told that nothing has more than relative validity; that ideals and beliefs are at best "myths"; and that the final end of intellectual analysis (Jewish "intellectualism") is dust and ashes. The feeblest peoples cracked most quickly: the result in Germany was the eager acceptance of the famous *Führerprinzip* whereby one man thinks and decides for millions of grateful sheep.

Fascism is the first self-conscious attempt of the lower middle classes, here become supreme, to construct a government and a world in their own image. If the results are none too pretty, blame the image. Professor Schuman very simply traces the entire spasmodic outburst to the "economic difficulties and psychic disorders" of this class in Germany.

Though the type of follower was largely the same in Italy and across the Rhine, the leaders were different. Hence the incredibly impressive character of the Hitler terror; impressive not in its brutality—the Russian terror was infinitely more extended—but in its purposelessness. The German opposition immediately ceased to exist so far as any real resistance was concerned. Therefore ". . . the Nazi terror was less a political weapon against foes than a discharge of the long-accumulated aggressions of the many botched and bungled personalities who had flocked to the swastika banner. . . . Nazi terrorists tortured and killed . . . for subjective satisfactions. . . . Every terror tends to bring into positions of power men of this type. But the N. S. D. A. P. [Nazi Party] was organized and led by such personalities." Why, then, wonder at the infantile intellectual level of the movement, or at such statements as this (quoted by the author from *Der Brunnen* of Düsseldorf, January 2, 1934): "How high Horst Wessel towers over that Jesus of Nazareth." For the same reason, the Third Reich, as Schuman notes, is "a paradise for tailors."

Hitlerism, the sworn foe of such calamities as self-government, free thought, tolerance, mercy, objective justice, the scientific spirit, and any universal concepts, inevitably exalts their opposites. Hence its chief preoccupation is the reburnishing of German glory by a new appeal to arms. War is the religion of the Nazi. Hitler has said in advance what he intends to do to his enemies—how he hopes to shape the continent of Europe to his idea of Germany's destiny. Thinking as he thinks, he cannot do otherwise. For the Germany he commands—perhaps any conceivable Germany—is without war hopelessly bankrupt. "Conquest may still be lucrative after all other economic activity has ceased to pay dividends." And it is Hitler's greatest piece of luck that his chosen enemies cannot take him seriously and heed his threats in time, that therefore none opposed him when opposition was still sure of success, just as none opposed Mussolini. And the result is that "the foes of Hitlerism in Europe may well bring themselves to . . . ruin in the coming war, which has now been rendered inevitable by international toleration of Nazi preparation for Armageddon."

It is cold comfort to read that Professor Schuman does not believe that such war will ultimately profit the Teutonic aggressor; that it will bring its makers no glory, but rather "the Fates and the Furies." "Here will the solemn Norns, under withered trees, and the dwarfed Nieblungs in their holes and caves, keep tryst with death."

It is not unlikely. Yet somehow the present reviewer must here part company with this gifted analyzer of the most dangerous of contemporary states. Professor Schuman foresees the worst—a new economic medievalism with economically self-supporting groups of national fanatics living in half-slave conditions because they would not learn that this is the inevitable goal of acquisitive capitalism. "The new despotism is the only possible form of power for the plutocracy and the aristocracy in the age of monopoly." And this age, he thinks, cannot renew prosperity. Well, perhaps not. In other words, the author believes with the Communists—and he is not an orthodox Marxist—that fascism is really the appropriate form of government in the last stage of capitalism.

To the reviewer, on the other hand, it would be equally true to state that "fascism is socialism as realized by the lower middle class." It is perfectly clear that at the beginning in Italy and Germany the rich supported Mussolini and Hitler in order to use them against the rising power of the masses. But is it so clear that the rich succeeded? Are the bankers, the big landowners, the chief industrialists in Italy, for instance, as prosperous or as powerful as in France? I think not. But, it may be argued, the capitalists only accept fascism when they are seriously threatened, which is not yet the case in France, as an alternative to some form of real socialism. Better half a loaf than none at all. This doubtless comes closer to the facts. But it is at least probable that, once the dust has settled, it will be seen that fascism is merely the form of government created by the lower or little middle class to herald its advent to power. For industrialism has made the technical lower class supreme in society. Its muddy ideas, dislike of both the rich and the proletariat, paradoxical adoration of the state, childish nationalism, lack

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of general vision, seem to be driving toward an *étatisme* which, after all, is not far removed from what Soviet Russia will look like one or two decades hence.

If this be true, Professor Schuman may soon find the sort of economic system he favors in the states he evidently abhors. The final struggle would not be between fascist penury and collectivist abundance, but between all forms of "totalitarian society" and an improved liberalism. All of which has no real bearing on Professor Schuman's admirable book.

EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

Another, Secret Germany

Rubber Truncheon. By Wolfgang Langhof. Translated by Lilo Linke. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

I Was Hitler's Prisoner. By Stefan Lorant. Translated by James Cleugh. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.75.

FOR centuries stories of the suffering of prison life have occupied a peculiar place in literature. Many of them have become world classics, for the life of a nation or of an epoch is nowhere more truly reflected than in its treatment of those unfortunates who come into conflict with the accepted standards of society and its ruling class. "Rubber Truncheon," by Wolfgang Langhof, and "I Was Hitler's Prisoner," by Stefan Lorant, enrich and supplement this illustrious company. The "Memoirs" of Vera Figner, heroine of the Russian revolutionary movement, and "Le Mie Prigioni," the moving story of Silvio Pellico, the Venetian pedagogue of the early nineteenth century who paid in the dungeons for fighting against the Austrian rulers of Venice, are pale stuff when compared to the tragedy of everyday life in Germany's concentration camps as these men saw it.

The horrors of the Spanish Inquisition and the agonies of men sent to Siberia during the Czarist regime have their place in the history of human suffering, but these things happened in countries untouched by modern culture, at a time when life itself was harsh and cruel. The torture chambers of the Inquisition reflected a conception of justice more rudimentary than ours, under which no man could be condemned until he confessed his guilt. They were the outgrowth, moreover, of an intense religious feeling which believed that a soul purged by confession before it entered the hereafter was worth a thousand deaths. They were an integral part of their time. It was left to civilization at the peak of the twentieth century, in one of the most highly developed nations in the world, to restore every horror known to the dark past of an unenlightened world, to invent, introduce, card index, and systematize cruelty as a political virtue, a cruelty devoid of hatred and emotion, as mechanized and impersonal as the mentality of the social system which bore it: men and women suffering months of solitary confinement, forced to spend days in narrow cupboards with slanted floors, coffins of horror in which a person can neither sit nor stand nor lie; prisoners who must beat each other until one of them loses consciousness; the never-ending fear of what the next day may bring; the knowledge that after each merciful unconsciousness there is another awakening too cruel for the mind to envisage. Out of every book that has been written about these Nazi hells breathes this longing for death as an escape from a life too awful for living.

Let me say at the outset, lest the foregoing give a false impression, that these books are more than a mere recital of horrors. They are human documents of alternating light and shadow, unmitigated terror and grim humor. No Hitler knave is so bestial that he has not his human traits, no jailer so harsh that he has no softer moments. After all, these S. A. men were once workers themselves, misguided proletarians who lost their

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bearings in the uncertainty of German post-war life. It is noteworthy that both authors portray the S. S. man in his trim black uniform, the representative of the semi-educated, smug German middle class which emerged out of the Hitlerite "revolution" with delusions of grandeur, as the prototype of Nazi cruelty.

Both Langhof and Lorant are members of the intellectual middle class. Wolfgang Langhof, well known among the workers of the Rhineland region as an actor and theatrical director, actively interested in the popularization of the modern drama, was arrested in Düsseldorf on February 28, 1933, the day of the Reichstag fire. He accompanied his captors in good cheer, so sure was he that there must be some mistake. But it was he who was mistaken. Thirteen months later he was finally released. In Germany the doors of his profession were closed to him. Warned that he might be arrested again, he went to Switzerland, where he is now a prominent member of the Zurich Stadttheater company.

Lorant, a young journalist, was—fortunately for himself—a citizen of Hungary. Before the coming of Hitler he was on the staff of the *Münchener Illustrierte Presse,* an excellent weekly published by the famous Jugend Verlag. He was as uninterested in politics as his brother in misfortune from Düsseldorf. The periodical for which he worked was an unpolitical family journal, beautifully illustrated, with well-written short stories, a novel in instalments, travel sketches, and the like. Röhm and Epp took charge of Bavaria and established the "Nationalist" state. Lorant remained. Why not? All this did not affect his life or his work. But the Nationalist state was of short duration. Hitler discarded the German Nationalists in his Cabinet. The conservative Junker elements were ousted from power. Their newspapers were frowned upon, were brought under Nazi control. A Nazi journalist, an S. S. man, coveted Lorant's position. It was as simple as that. Lorant was arrested. Six months later, after representations by the Hungarian government, he was released.

His book makes no pretensions to literary style. It is a diary kept under the most difficult conditions, depicting the happenings of the hours and days as they passed in endless misery. Lorant himself rarely appears in these pages. They tell of his fellow-prisoners, men of nation-wide and world renown. There was Count Arco, the man who killed Kurt Eisner, the Bavarian Socialist, and who is now accused of having threatened the life of Hitler; Cossmann, the German Nationalist Jew whose conservative newspapers in Bavaria had given passive support to the Nazi movement; Schweyer, the Bavarian Minister of the Interior who had refused to accept Hitler's word of honor and now, twelve years later, was paying the penalty; Dr. Gerlach, the courageous pacifist, and others. Lorant is released and on his arrival in Budapest is met by his wife and their four-year-old son, who greets him with a salute, "Heil Hitler." They had spent those six months in Berlin.

Of the two, "Rubber Truncheon" is unquestionably the more moving document. Langhof's innate sense of the dramatic colors every page with warm humanity. The reader sheds tears over the suffering, grows warm with pride over the indomitable courage and the splendid solidarity, of the simple workers who shared Langhof's travail. He is carried away by the gentleness and tenderness of hardened revolutionists toward their more unfortunate comrades, deeply moved by their forbearance and their understanding for the weak, and shamed by their strength. Those who have allowed Nazism to prejudice them against the German people should read this simple recital. Those who despise the German worker for his "spineless submission to National Socialism" will get a new concept of the courage and endurance of the race. Those who have lost hope will derive new inspiration from the determined efforts of these hunted, beaten men and women who carry on the illegal work of anti-Nazi propaganda under threat of a fate that is a thousand times worse than death.

Out of the pages of these two books a hidden, secret Germany speaks to us, cries out for understanding, sympathy, and help. May they be read by many Americans, particularly by those who visit Germany and return with grandiose tales of National Socialist achievement.

LUDWIG LORE

Euripides in Harlem

The Medea and Some Poems. By Countee Cullen. Harper and Brothers. $2.

BY one with a sense of the integrities of language, few drearier experiences can be imagined than reading a Greek play in one of the current academic translations, or sitting through a performance of the same version on a Commencement Week program. The translator's first concern seems to be to sound like the Bible or Shakespeare; his actual achievement, in most instances, is to give a poor imitation of a ham poet of the eighteenth century. Even when, as in the case of Professor Gilbert Murray, the translator has literary gifts, he usually conceals the dramatic qualities of the play and repels the greater part of his audience by using stilted, archaic language.

Where Oxford dons have so often failed, an American Negro writer has succeeded. Mr. Cullen has rendered Euripides's best-known tragedy into living and utterable English. He has made little attempt to convey the poetry of the original, preferring to concentrate on dramatic situation and realistic portrayal of character. The result is a very forceful and poignant re-creation of the story of the barbarian sorceress whose fury against a faithless lover wins the tragic conflict with her love for her children. Only a few of the choruses have been put into lyrical form; the rest of the play has been cast in prose that is simple often to the point of baldness and, except for two or three incongruous lapses into slang, both colloquial and dignified. Mr. Cullen renders thus line 703, which I have chosen at random: "Then you have reason to be sad." The authors of three of the most widely current professorial versions, the first two of which are in verse and the third in prose, maltreat Euripides as follows. A. S. Way: "Sooth, lady, reason was that thou shouldst grieve." G. Murray: "Woman, thou hast indeed much cause for grief." A. T. Murray: "In sooth, good reason, woman, hast thou for thy grief." Perhaps fifty persons today read the classics in translation to one who reads them in the original; if there is to be a popular revival of interest in the Greek drama, it appears that this is more likely to originate in Harlem than in the universities.

Written for Rose McClendon, the star of "In Abraham's Bosom," Mr. Cullen's version is admirably suited to the exigences of the contemporary stage. For an adaptation which does not pretend to be a literal translation, it follows the original closely, giving English equivalents for all but a few of the speeches in the Greek. Allusions unfamiliar to a present-day audience have, of course, been omitted, and the whole has been considerably shortened. The most serious omission, which seems without justification, is that of the two passages which are *loci classici* for Euripides's "feminism"; these are not extraneous to the dramatic action, since they express part of the heroine's motivation.

The volume contains also a group of poems, including a number of sonnets in Mr. Cullen's Keatsian mood, four translations from the French of Baudelaire and Pierre Louys, and an invocation entitled Scottsboro, Too, Is Worth Its Song.

PHILIP BLAIR RICE

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